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ENTERED AS SECOND CLASS MATTER AT THE NEW YORK, N. Y., POST OFFICE.

May 27, 1891.

No. 657.

Published Every
Wednesday.

Beadle & Adams. Publishers,
98 WILLIAM STREET, NEW YORK.

Ten Cents a Copy.
\$5.00 a Year.

Vol. LI.



"LONG TOM FOREVER! HE CAN SEE TO HIT 'EM EVERY TIME!"

Long Tom Dart,

THE YANKEE PRIVATEER.

A New Naval Story of the War of 1812.

BY COL. E. Z. C. JUDSON,
(NED BUNTLINE.)

CHAPTER I.

LONG TOM AFLOAT.

"Tom Dart! What on the mortal airth be yeou a-doin'? Be yeou a moonstruck lunatic?"

Jasper Doolittle, one of the solid men of Salem, asked this question of a gigantic old man, clad in a seaman's garb, who was superintending the gang of men lowering a huge, old-fashioned brass cannon from a pair of shears erected on the wharf to the deck of a large sloop moored alongside.

"I'm fitting out my sloop for service! If that's a sign o' bein' crazy, I'm loony as a June bug on ice!" was the curt answer of the old man.

"Service? What service? Your craft is old as the hills—most as old as you be!" cried Deacon Jasper, as he was usually called.

"She is all oak and Georgy pine, and as tough as her owner!" responded Tom Dart. Long Tom he was usually named, for he stood six feet six in his canvas shoes. "I've got a Government permit to go to sea as a privateer and I don't forget that my two boys, as good as ever were raised in Salem, have been pressed to serve ag'in' their own flag and country in a British frigate! And I don't forget if you do, while you're sayin' your prayers and countin' your gold, that these same infarnal British are ravagin' our coasts, burnin' towns, killin' women and children as well as men; carrying fire and sword wherever they land! I'm goin' to do my duty, whether I'm counted crazy or wise! That's your answer, Deacon Jasper Doolittle, first and last!"

"I deserved it, Tom Dart! I didn't think o' your boys when I spoke—nor of you and your good wife Jerusha, left desolate in your old age!"

The deacon's voice trembled with feeling when he said this. Then he added:

"I'm a *Do-little* by name, but I'll be a *do-something* now, if I never get a chance again. Go on with your work, old man; fit out your sloop the best you can; I've got the gold to pay for powder, shot and provisions for her and to help man her. She has been on many a hard voyage under your care and can stand more work o' the same kind! I'd be a lunatic if I didn't feel for you in your troubles and our country in *hers*!"

Tears were in old Tom Dart's eyes when he turned and grasped the hand of the deacon.

"I misjudged ye, deacon, an' if I spoke harsh I'm sorry. I'll be thankful for all the help I can git from you and my neighbors, for, as you know, I'm not over-weighted with ready cash, though I'll shell out all I have in gettin' the sloop ready. That cannon I brought from a pirate wreck on the old Tortuga, on a voyage to the Spanish main. I had it in the hold for ballast, but it is sound as 'twas when new and will do good service if I can get shot cast to fit it. If not she'll spit out bags o' bullets and nails, junk bottles and scrap-iron!"

"The foundry shall fit you in shot, Tom Dart; I'll see to that if you'll give me the size and heft you want. And I'll call a meetin' of the Selectmen, as I've a right to do, bein' their Moderator, and we'll 'list a crew for you and fit you for sea as fast as it can be done and done well!"

"God bless you, Jasper—Deacon Jasper, I mean! My old wife will cry like a baby for joy, for she dreamed three nights runnin' that I'd whipped a British frigate and got our boys back again! And I'll do it, by the great Eternal! See if I don't!"

When it became known over Salem what Long Tom Dart was doing, it seemed as if every man, woman and child in the place took an interest in him and his work. Forty young men volunteered to man the sloop, almost every one a seaman and used to the coast as a fisherman, or navigator on long voyages. Arms, stores, even clothing and bedding came down by the cart-load, and the old captain, with plenty of help, soon had all on board he could stow.

The long gun—a sixty-four-pounder it was found to be when shot was cast to fit her caliber—was mounted on a strong oaken revolving carriage; some swivels and blunderbusses were mounted on each bow and quarter, and soon the "Terror," as she was rechristened, from the "Jerusha," was ready to do savage work in her new sphere.

Within three days from that, when we introduce our hero to the reader, the Terror was ready for sea.

Though only a single-masted craft, carrying mainsail, jib and gaff-topsail when close-hauled, she had an immense squaresail, with yard and booms, to spread when before the wind.

And, old though she was, she had made many

a West India voyage in half the time taken by larger and more pretentious vessels. She had no superior in speed on the coast, and Long Tom knew how to get all she could go out of her when he was in charge.

A son of Deacon Doolittle, Jonathan, his only boy, who had been three East India voyages as mate of a ship, was chosen by Captain Dart for his first lieutenant; two other sons of leading men in town took second and third lieutenancies. A Scotchman, named McDonald, noted for two things—skill in his profession and hatred of England—volunteered as surgeon. Two old and experienced gunners, who had seen *foreed* service in the English navy had charge of "Old Ebenezer," as Long Tom named his piratical trophy, the brass pivot-gun which revolved amidships on the sloop's deck.

The morning she was ready for sea there was a crowd of citizens to see her off.

Sally Ann Doolittle, the deacon's daughter, had just presented a set of colors, gotten up by her and some fair friends, and these flew from gaff and mast-head on this occasion.

"Mates, I kind o' *calc'late* there's a first chop chance out there to try the range of Old Ebenezer."

Tom Dart pointed to an English gun-brig which belonged to the squadron then blockading Boston harbor.

CHAPTER II.
GIVING THE BRITISHER A TASTE OF YANKEE METAL.

THIS craft was not more than six miles from shore when he pointed to her. She had run in on a noted fishing-bank just to the north of the entrance to the port of Salem. Through his long spy-glass Tom Dart could see that her crew were engaged in catching fish, doubtless for use in the squadron, since none could be bought, so intensely were the British hated on the coast.

"I kin poke the Terror inside the reef and lay off two mile from her and if we don't tickle her ribs our powder's good for nothin'!"

"That's the game, cap'n. Let's try it," ejaculated Jonathan Doolittle, rubbing his brawny hands together in glee.

"All right! H'iste away the mainsail. Be ready to cast off fore and aft shore-lines. Let go all and hoist that jib!"

In less than a minute the sloop, with a fresh, leading breeze, stood out of the harbor. There was no cheering on shore or aboard. The people and the crew were too anxious for that. The first watched the sloop as she neared the enemy with dread, lest a vessel so superior in guns and force would get the better of their patriotic relatives.

The second were *quiet*, as brave men generally are when they go into battle where lives must be taken and lost.

Standing out of the harbor, Captain Dart luffed up along the shore inside a reef and took a channel well known to him that kept a wide and impassable shoal between his vessel and the British brig.

He sent all his men below but three or four, and, as his long gun was hidden under an old sail, the craft looked so like an old coaster or a fishing-sloop that she did not appear to elicit any attention from the people on the brig-of-war.

Long Tom stood forward, spy-glass in hand, and watched the enemy closely, while Lieutenant Doolittle steered the sloop under the direction of the captain.

"She is layin' stern to shore with the flood-tide," said Dart, when they were yet three miles away. "When we git jist eend on to her we'll not be more than two mile off, if so much—maybe a half-mile less, and we can heave to and jist rake the insides out of her with Old Ebenezer."

In a little while the sloop had reached the desired position and then Captain Dart gave the order:

"Let her come up in the wind, Jonathan! Haul that jib-sheet over to windward, boys. On deck, all hands! Uncover Ebenezer, and you gunners set her to work!"

In a minute or two the sloop lay almost stationary with the mainsail flat to sheet-blocks and the jib to windward. And so well had Tom Dart managed that the English brig lay exactly stern-to, so that her two masts were in true range.

As yet, there was no stir aboard the British brig—no sign that her officers looked with suspicion on the actions of the sloop, or even noticed her.

But this inaction was not destined to last long. One minute elapsed after the sloop got steady while Bob Hall, the chief gunner, carefully sighted the great gun. His mate, Elihu Coffin, was blowing a lighted match which he held in his hand to have the fire fresh.

"Quick! Touch her off now!" cried the old gunner, as he sprung one side to avoid the gun's recoil.

With a report heavy as a crash of thunder, and a jar that shook the vessel so the crew staggered on their feet, the double-shot, heavily-charged gun sent its first warning to the astonished enemy.

"Swab her out and load! You've knocked two cabin windows into one!" shouted Captain Dart, whose glass had been at his eye when the shot was fired. "Jerusalem—how them Britishers jump! We've waked 'em up, consarn their pesky skins! Give 'em another shot quick, afore they h'iste anchor and make sail!"

Two or three minutes only elapsed before the gun was again ready and Bob Hall said:

"I'll give it to her a leetle higher up, capt'ing! Maybe I'll knock a mast out of her afore she gets sail on it!"

And the second shot flew on its way.

"Too low yet—but you've torn a hole right through the stern where the wheel ought to be. If her steerin'-gear is gone, she'll never get out of our range till we've riddled her fore and aft. Creation—how they're scamperin' up aloft to get the canvas onto her! Shoot higher, Mr. Hall!—raise Ebenezer's nose jest a leetle!"

The brig was veering; she had evidently slipped her cable without waiting to get her anchor up, and the sails were loose and being sheeted home when the third shot from the long gun cut the brig's mainmast short off, just above the deck, and it came down, yards and topmasts all a wreck, with many men aloft at the time!

"She's got it!—she's got it now! Good for you, Bob Hall!" cried Tom Dart, jumping up and down in glee. "Let her have it, fast as you can—hello, she's comin' broadside-to! Down below, men! It's no shame to dodge when you can!"

A part of the crew went below, but the majority stayed on deck, though they knew the brig would return the fire the instant her guns would bear.

In a few seconds a scattering broadside came from the brig, but the guns were of short range or else badly aimed, for not a shot reached the sloop, though several dropped in the water not a cable's-length short.

"Hull her now, if you kin, Bob Hall! She mustn't git away, though she is tryin' to!" cried the happy old captain. "See how she yaws! I knowed you had cut away her steerin' gear! Fill away the jib! We'll keep movin', now, for she may have a gun that'll reach us!"

"I calc'late she has, capt'ing!" returned the man who slacked away the jib sheets, for a round shot struck the water just ahead of the bowsprit, so near him that the spray wet the clew of the jib.

The brig, under her head sail, was evidently trying to creep out of range of a gun so destructive as "Old Ebenezer," but her guns were served as fast as they could be in the confusion, yet evidently with poor aim, for, though Bob Hall, from the start, missed but one shot, the sloop was yet unharmed when Captain Dart shouted to his gunners:

"You've hulled her, bad! She's lowering her boats! I'll bet she's sinkin', the way they hurry!"

"Maybe they're comin' here to carry us aboard!" suggested Doctor McDonald, who had left his surgical tools below and come on deck to see the fun.

Again Old Ebenezer spoke in a tone of thunder, and then Captain Dart yelled with delight:

"She is sinkin'! She has hanled down her colors! She is ours! She is ours! Hurrah for the old sloop! Cheer, boys, cheer! Our first fight is a victory! Don't fire another gun, Bob Hall, but load with grape and canister! I'm goin' to stand out arter them boats, and if the men in 'em don't give up, they'll drink salt water sure as I'm Long Tom Dart!"

Crowded boats could be seen leavng the brig, and while the sloop, heading for an opening in the reef, was making for a channel through which she could reach the disabled brig, the hull of the latter, with a sullen plunge, went out of sight!

But the water was shoal: her foremast with the sails still on it showed above the surface of the sea with men clinging to the yards.

Quickly, now, Captain Dart stood out through an opening in the reef toward the wreck, whose three boats—all that the brig could lower before she sunk—were filled with officers and men.

Off to the southward, an English frigate, attracted by the firing, was crowding sail toward the scene of action. She was seven or eight miles away, yet the boats were headed toward her in hope of rescue.

Captain Dart ran his sloop just to windward of the group of boats, and seeing that the officers in them yet wore their side-arms, while some men had muskets, he shouted:

"Heave every weepo you have overboard and pull in for Salem harbor as fast as you can or I'll sink you where you are!"

"We surrender! You've done enough damage with your cursed old sloop now!" cried the captain of the brig, who had one arm in a sling.

"Don't you cuss my sloop, you p'ison skunk, or I'll run you down, anyway!" shouted Long Tom. "Heave your toad-sticker overboard and make your men do the same with their weepoens or I'll send a bushel of grape and canister in among ye—I will, by the eternal smoke!"

Sullenly the Englishmen threw their arms into the sea and headed their boats toward Salem.

"Now pull, and pull for your lives, for if that

frigate o' yourn comes within gun-shot o' me, afore you're in, I'll sink you first and then go for her! I will, by the eternal smoke!"

The British officers and men saw they had a man to deal with who meant business and did "pull for their lives."

Running within hail of the men clinging to the sunken brig's mast, Dart shouted:

"Tell the captain of that frigate runnin' in that this is the work of Long Tom Dart, and if the admiral of his fleet don't send my two boys ashore that he pressed a week afore war was declared, I'll have a British life for every hair on their heads! D'y'e hear?"

"Ay, ay, sir!"

"Then hearin', understand, and do my biddin'. What's left of your crew in the boats are my prisoners, and I'll keep 'em on short feed till I see my boys. I will, by the eternal smoke!"

He now squared away and followed the boats in, keeping just astern of them with his armed men and loaded gun ready to sink them on the least sign of treachery.

The frigate, crowding all sail, bore down toward the wreck, but when she rounded to near it, Captain Dart was steering his sloop into Salem harbor, with three boats and sixty British officers and seamen in tow.

As he entered the harbor he fired Old Ebenezer off to leeward in derision, and then ran in alongside the wharf which he had left only three hours before!

"Well done, Tom Dart! You're an honor to the nation and a glory to Salem town!" shouted Deacon Jasper Doolittle. "Anybody hurt?"

"Not on our side, deacon. But I calc'late them Britishers got scorched. You can ax their capt'ing. He is there with one fin crippled. Got room in the lock-up for these p'ison skunks?"

"Guess we have! If we haven't we'll make it," was the reply.

And amid fierce and sullen looks and many a word of menace the prisoners were landed, and without regard to rank marched off to Salem jail.

CHAPTER III.

BRAVE SONS OF A BRAVE FATHER.

It so happened that the frigate Galatea, the British ship nearest the brig when she went down, was the vessel on which Elnathan and Abijah Dart had been impressed, just before war broke out. They and seven more young men from Salem had been taken from a fishing-boat off the port, and had heard the report made by an officer who clung to the mast of the sunken brig when he was rescued by a boat from the frigate.

"Daddy'll keep his word, by smoke!" said Elnathan to Abijah in a low tone when he heard it. "He has made a good beginnin'!"

"I calc'late he has. But, how on airth did he dew it? We seen the sloop, but what had she aboard to sink a twenty-gun brig with a crew of a hundred men?"

"He must have dug out that old brass cannon he brought for ballast from the South Seas. 'Twas the biggest gun in Salem—bigger than the long thirty-twos in the harbor batteries, you know."

"By smoke, you've hit it!" ejaculated the younger brother. "He's got Old Ebenezer, as he used to call it, on the sloop, and he can shoot it twice as far as 'most any other gun will carry! He has got a crew of Salem boys, and they know what beans are as well as if they were born in Beverly!"

"Is your name Dart?" asked a marine orderly, with his belt and side-arms on, addressing Elnathan, at this moment.

"Yes, and so is mine! We're brothers. What's wantin'?" Abijah answered, for both.

"The cap'n wants you in the cabin, and you'd better speak smooth to him. He is madder than a nest of hornets! Come right along; I was sent to find you!"

"By smoke, he'll find we are true Yankees if we have been kidnapped aboard of a British frigate!" declared Elnathan, speaking fearlessly. "When I fire a gun against my countrymen I'll stand in front of its muzzle—I will, by smoke!"

Following the red-coated orderly they were ushered into the upper cabin of the frigate, where the officer just rescued from the wreck was seated at a table, with the captain of the frigate opposite to him.

The face of the latter was flushed with anger.

"Do you know a man who calls himself Long Tom Dart?" asked the captain, curtly.

"I calc'late we do!" responded Abijah.

"Why shouldn't we when he is our daddy?" added Elnathan.

"So! You are the young men he dares to threaten us about!"

"I calc'late we be! And if he has said he'd do anything, he'll do it, by smoke. Tom Dart never told a lie in all his life!"

"Silence! How dare you offer an opinion until I ask for it?"

"Jest as you say, capt'ing! You've got the grip on us, just now!"

"I've a good mind to hang you both at the yard-arm just to show that old reprobate how I despise his threats!"

Abijah's face turned red as the coat on the

marine's back, while Elnathan, with clinched fists, cried out:

"You're a durned coward, if you be a king's cap'n, to call a gray-haired man names when he can't resent it, and to insult his sons because they're in your power! Hang us, and, by smoke, old Tom Dart will burn every prisoner he has got—three boat-loads of 'em—just as sure as there's a God in Heaven!"

The captain and the lieutenant at his table sprung to their feet, while the marine drew his bayonet from his belt, for the tall forms of the two brothers, each over six feet high, bent forward, and they looked as if, single-handed and unarmed, they would spring upon and throttle the astonished captain.

"Mutiny, by my soul!" shouted the captain.

"We've never listed in your old hulk and we can't be mutineers. We are free citizens of the United States of America, by smoke, kidnapped on the high seas, and you can hang us or shoot us if you will, but we'll never lift a hand ag'in' our country!"

"You've spoke my mind, brother 'Bije, and I'll stand to all you've said!" added Elnathan.

"I'll put you both in double irons till I see the admiral!" thundered the captain. "Messenger boy, call the master-at-arms and tell him to bring a file of marines with him."

"Durn you—do your worst! By smoke, there'll be a sorry day of settlement, and that afore gray hairs come in your head!" shouted Abijah.

"Hold! Could you pilot this frigate to a point where I could open fire on the town you come from?"

"We both could, but we'll die ten thousand deaths before we'll do it!" replied Elnathan, with almost fierce decision.

"We'll see!" retorted the captain, angrily. "After I've reported to the admiral I'll volunteer to burn the town of Salem, and I'll do it while you two mutineers swing at my yard-arms. And you shall pilot me in, if I have to cut your flesh in shreds with the cat-o'-ninetails!"

A sergeant and six armed marines came in with a brutal-looking man who was known as the master-at-arms or jailer of the frigate.

The latter carried hand and foot shackles.

"Iron these insolent Yankees hand and foot and put them in the brig* on bread and water till further orders."

The sergeant saluted, surrounded the brothers, gave the order to march—and the brave fellows were at once escorted to a space under the forecastle planked off for prisoners, where a marine with loaded musket and fixed bayonet stood guard all the time.

Here, with brutal rudeness, the two brave young men were ironed and given the bare planks of the ship to sit on or lie down on as suited them best.

"I only wish daddy knew o' this!" said Elnathan, as his irons clanked harshly on his ears.

"He will hear of it some time, and then, by smoke, somethin' ll snap!" responded his brother. "Don't be cast down, Nate; there's a God in Israel yet, as Deacon Jasper used to say."

"I'm not wilting, 'Bije, but these irons gall my free-born limbs. I'd rather be overboard than here!"

"Hush! Don't talk so; you'll be heard. Maybe you'll find friends when you least expect it. I'm a pressed man, myself!" said a low, kind voice.

It was the sentinel who spoke, and his accent was not English. It had a very slight touch of the Irish brogue, though the soldier spoke in excellent English. He was evidently an educated and a feeling man.

"Thankee! We'll keep still as mice and wait," declared Elnathan.

"We'll not have to wait long; the cap'n swears he'll hang us to the yard-arm!"

"Ah—he threatens death?" asked the soldier, in a low tone, for if caught conversing with a prisoner, a terrible whipping would be the least of his punishment. "Your friends on shore should know it. A threatened reprisal upon the prisoners there, might save you trouble. I will be relieved in a quarter of an hour. The tide is running in and will flood for two or three hours. Tell me who to write to and I'll put a letter in a bottle and drop it unseen overboard. It may reach shore and be found by your friends."

"Jest so! Write to Cap'n Tom Dart, and we'll be ever so thankful!" said Elnathan.

"Put Salem on it, too!" enjoined his brother.

"I will! Say no more—it is risky!" added the marine.

CHAPTER IV.

TOO MUCH FOR THE ADMIRAL.

THE captain of the frigate, after looking closely at his charts, stood in toward Salem harbor as near as he dared, for the purpose of reconnoitering the place to see how the entrance was fortified before running out to report to the admiral.

He was not long in learning that the place was prepared for defense. He had run in within a couple of miles of a low point covered with

*The guard-room or prison on board men-o'-war.

bushes outside the harbor, and had hauled on a wind preparing to tack off-shore, when a battery of six long thirty-two-pound cannon opened on him so suddenly and sharply that he had a dozen round shot in his hull and ten men killed before his vessel was hove about and standing off. The battery was so well masked that neither guns nor men were seen until the crash of shot through planks and timbers told what good practice they were in. The captain was furious.

He sent two hot broadsides in-shore as he was standing off, but they seemed to do no damage, for the battery kept up its fire as long as a shot would reach him.

He made all sail now to report to the admiral of the British fleet, off Boston, that the twenty-gun brig Dolphin had been sunk by a single gun on an old sloop and all her crew killed or taken prisoners except one lieutenant and seven men whom he had rescued from the foremast of the sunken brig.

In his report he also detailed his own attempt to look into the harbor and see how it was prepared for defense and had discovered, to his cost and with the loss of ten men, that batteries were planted a full gun-shot from the town, which would have to be silenced or captured before the town could be approached by an invading force.

Yet he asked for permission to organize a boat attack, and in conjunction with the fire of his frigate to attack the batteries, and then, if successful, to capture and burn the town as a punishment for the injury done.

He gave the message Long Tom Dart had sent, and stated the fact of his having two sons of the old man on the frigate in double irons and why he had ironed them.

"I will go on board the Galatea and talk with them in person!" said the admiral. "Gold, or the fear of death may induce them to reveal what the defenses of the place consist of. For it would be madness to attack without knowing just what is to be encountered."

In a short time after the admiral was received on board the frigate with the usual honors, the two prisoners, Abijah and Elnathan Dart, were escorted by a marine guard to the cabin. Their irons were not removed.

"Men—I am sorry to see such stout, fine-looking seamen in irons!" said the admiral.

"Be you? Why don't you order 'em taken off, then?" demanded Elnathan, in a sarcastic tone.

"I will—conditionally! You are well acquainted with the harbor and town of Salem?" said the admiral.

"We ought to be since we were born and brought up there, hadn't we?" returned Abijah, speaking in his turn.

"Then you can do me a favor and better your own fortunes. Do what I require and your irons shall be taken off, five pounds in gold be presented to each of you, and you shall be promoted to the rank of boatswains' mates!"

"By smoke, that's temptin', 'specially the two first offers. What do you want us to do?" asked Elnathan, with an air of well-assumed simplicity.

"Only to describe or draw a plan of the town and harbor, show where the batteries are located and the depth of water in the channel going in!"

"I know jest how you can find out, makin' no mistakes and gittin' on a sure thing!" said Abijah, coolly, for he saw Elnathan's face flush and he knew the latter would give a hot answer.

"How?" asked the admiral.

"By goin' in yourself and tryin' to do the dirty work you'd bribe us to do, you p'ison old skunk! We are Americans and we don't sell ourselves!"

"No—by smoke!" thundered Elnathan.

"Did you ever see a man swing from the yard-arm, you insolent scoundrel?"

"No, you p'ison old sarpint, and, what's more, I don't calc'late to, either! The cap'n there threatened to hang us and we told him, as we tell you, do it if you dare and see what'll follow! We've a daddy who has to-day sunk a twenty-gun brig with one gun, and in that same town of Salem there's five hundred able-bodied men as good as he is, who'll risk life to revenge us! If you think it will pay to hang us, do it! We'll not bend a knee to ask your mercy. We can't die but once!"

"That's so, by smoke!" added 'Bijah.

The admiral looked his astonishment. He was used to seeing men cringe and humble themselves before him, and to be thus boldly defied by two young seamen was more than he could understand.

"I will give you until ten o'clock to-morrow morning to reconsider your decision, young men! If you do not then accept my terms—look for the worst! You have already forfeited your lives as mutineers. Forget it not, between now and ten to-morrow!"

This ended the interview. The brothers were taken back to the "brig" and left to think over their coming doom.

"I calc'late we're in for it, 'Bijah. That old admiral talked dead earnest!"

"What did he say?"

It was the friendly marine, again on guard, who asked the question.

"That he'd swing us from the yard-arm at ten o'clock to-morrow morning if we didn't agree to play traitor and show the way into Salem harbor. And we'll swing, I calc'late, for we'll never play *Arnold* for no man nor no money!"

"No, by smoke!" added 'Bijah.

"Ten o'clock, and we are lying off Boston, It must be ten or fifteen miles from here to Salem!"

"Sart'in that far, I calc'late!"

"My watch ends at eight bells. A light dinghy is towing at the boat-boom close by the captain's barge. If I can slip into the water over the bows and get into that boat, I'll try to reach Salem and do something for your rescue. If your friends send off, swearing to hang ten prisoners for each of you, I think the admiral will change his mind. It is your only chance. I long since made up my mind to desert, and at morning roll-call it is most likely that Private Peter Connolly will be missed. If you hear of it you'll know he has gone to try and save you!"

"May the blessin' of the Lord go with you!" said Elnathan, solemnly.

"Amen—by smoke!" added Abijah.

"Hush—the sergeant of the guard looks this way!"

CHAPTER V.

NEWS FROM THE DOOMED.

THE old clock in the town-hall of Salem had struck the hour of two. The two watchmen who patrolled the streets had shouted from their respective watch-boxes:

"Two o'clock, cloudy mornin', an' all's well!"

And under cover of that cloudy night and morning, sculling the dinghy, or smallskiff with one oar, the deserter from the frigate Galatea, Peter Connolly, found his way into Salem harbor, passing the batteries on the points, unseen, and attracted by a light in her rigging ran his boat alongside the sloop of Long Tom Dart.

Jonathan Doolittle was officer of the watch, and sprung to the side as a lookout hailed the boat:

"Boat ahoy! Who are you?" he cried. "The watch—stand to arms!"

"I'm a friend—a single man, with important news. Don't fire on me!" was the prompt answer.

"One man can't do much ag'in' fifty. Come aboard and let's hear your important news. Where be you from?"

"I've just deserted from the frigate Galatea, the ship you drove off with your batteries yesterday, and I came to try and get some means of saving the lives of two young Americans who are condemned to be hung from her yard-arms at ten this morning, because they would not pilot an expedition in to take and burn your town!"

"Jerusalem!—be they *Tom Dart's* boys?"

"Abijah and Elnathan Dart. They are in double irons now, and I swore I'd save them if I could. I've risked life to do it, for if I had been detected in leaving the ship I would have been shot then and there."

The marine in his uniform, yet wet, for he had dropped into the water over the bows of the frigate, swum silently to the boom, cut the painter of the dinghy and drifted off in the darkness till he could climb in unheard, looked sincere and honest.

"Cap'n Dart is ashore at his house to-night, gittin' ready to go to sea to-morrow. Come down in the cabin with me and put on some dry clothes, and by that time I'll have a boat ready and we'll go ashore and tell Old Tom and rouse the selectmen. They'll do all men can do, but what on earth 'twill be I can't see."

Before a half-hour passed Old Tom Dart stood in the presence of Connolly in the big hall of the Doolittle mansion, and Jasper Doolittle, with the twelve selectmen of the town-council were with him.

Lieutenant Jonathan Doolittle, his sister Sally Ann, a lovely blonde of eighteen years, also the gray-haired wife of Jasper Doolittle were present.

"You've heard, all of you, what this good soldier, who has deserted the king's service to try and save my boys, says. They've sworn to hang 'em out there, if they don't turn traitor to us and their country. And you all know they'll die first!"

"They told the admiral so to his face and defied him to do his worst!" said Connolly.

"Jest like 'em," said the old man. "I don't see how on earth with nothin' but my sloop and one big gun I can save 'em in the middle of a fleet like that out there. But, if they do die—I'll make it the dearest murder England ever owned to! I will, by the eternal smoke!"

"They shall not die!" cried Sally Ann Doolittle, with an impetuous energy which thrilled every listening ear. "Do as I bid you, father and I'll risk my life and liberty to bring 'em here safe to their home!"

"Your plan, child—let us hear your plan!" cried the astonished deacon, excitedly.

"Draw up a paper signed by your official names, sealed with the town seal and counter-signed by Captain Tom there."

"In that paper declare solemnly and on your oaths that if Elnathan and Abijah Dart are

not safely delivered to the bearer of your letter and allowed to return free and unharmed to their homes, and that by four of the clock this day, you will hang every officer and man of the seventy prisoners now in your hands in this town!"

"Your gal is *right*, Deacon Jasper; that'll fetch 'em—it will, by the eternal smoke!" cried Tom Dart.

"Write the paper and sign it quick," ordered gallant Sally Ann. "We've no time to lose. 'Twill soon be daylight and I must be off!"

"You—Sally Ann? What on earth be you a-thinkin' of?" cried her astonished mother.

"That Abijah Dart is my promised husband and no one livin' has a better right to try to save him! I'll take your shallop, daddy, she is fast under sail or oars, and four of our negro men to sail or row her, and go out with a white flag and your letter. Bad as they be, the British will not fire on a woman who carries a flag of truce on an errand of mercy. And when they see what a woman dares for the man she loves, and the country she honors, they'll see that the paper I bear comes from men that'll do what they've sworn to. Cap'n Tom, I'll bring your boys back to you, safe and well!"

"I believe you will, by the eternal smoke!" asseverated the old hero, with deep feeling.

Quickly the clerk of the council drew up the paper, dictated by Sally Ann. It was concise and strong. There could be no mistake in its meaning. Only one addition, and that was suggested by Peter Connolly, was added.

If the two men required were delivered safe as demanded, the selectmen pledged themselves to treat their British prisoners kindly and to hold them for exchange for Americans captured or impressed, and to send off two able-bodied seamen for the two released, as soon as the two young men reached the town.

The sun was rising in a bank of clouds and a fresh breeze ruffled the waters of the bay when Sally Ann Doolittle, in a neat dress of snow-white muslin, took the tiller of the small shallop which her father used as his private fishing-boat. It had one lug sail and had four long oars or sweeps to be used when the sail could not serve—that is in a calm, or in a narrow channel with a head-wind.

Wind and tide were both against the brave girl, but there was plenty of the former and the boat was fast and stanch.

Without a reef in the sail, laying gunwales-to, all the ebon crew to windward as ballast, the fair messenger headed toward the distant fleet as near as the wind would let her shape her course.

Time flew, as did her boat, but she had to tack again, and then again, to reach her destination.

"Heaven help me!" she sighed. "It will be all we can possibly do to get there by ten o'clock. I ought to have got off an hour sooner!"

The wind freshened, the spray flew all over the boat as it plunged into the heavy seas, but never for a second did the drenched and shivering girl falter. With her hand on the tiller, her eye on the weather-leech of the almost bursting sail, she stood on, murmuring:

"I will save them or perish also!"

Nearer and nearer to the fleet she drew, and at last, recognizing the frigate which had been driven off from Salem Point, she steered directly for it.

When almost within hailing distance, she saw that ropes had been secured in blocks from the fore and main yards and heard the sound of a muffled drum on board.

CHAPTER VI.

AN ALL-AROUND SURPRISE.

To the sound of that muffled drum, surrounded by a guard of marines with fixed bayonets, Abijah and Elnathan Dart were marched to the quarter-deck of the Galatea, where the British admiral in full uniform, surrounded by officers, waited to confront them with their doom.

Every eye on board ship was fixed on the calm, resolute faces of the two brave Americans, even the sentinels and lookouts whose glances should have been cast over the surrounding waters, forgot their duty in the fascination of looking on men about to die.

"Abijah and Elnathan Dart, in five minutes more the time I allowed you expires. If you decide to accept the terms I offered your irons will be stricken off and you can walk the decks as free as any man on board. If not—the ropes are reeved which will launch you into eternity!"

The admiral spoke slowly, seriously, and loud enough to be heard from stem to stern of the great frigate.

Just as clear and without a tremor in his voice, Elnathan Dart answered:

"We calc'late you can go right on with your hangin'—we can neither be bought or scared into treason to our country!"

"That's the ticket—by the eternal smoke!" added Abijah.

"Chaplain, read the service for the dying," ordered the admiral, his voice stern and cold.

"A strange boat with a white flag flying right alongside!" shouted the marine sentinel at the gangway.

At the same instant a slender, girlish form rushed up the side ladder which had been rigged for the admiral, and with her wet dress clinging to her perfect form, her long, fair locks of glossy hair drenched with ocean spray, her blue eyes all ablaze with feeling, she rushed aft to where the prisoners stood and gasped out:

"I thank my God that I am in time! Abijah, I have come to save you and Elnathan."

"To see us die, I calc'late, my dear gal," responded Abijah, sadly.

"What does this mean? Who are you and where from?" cried the astonished admiral.

"I am the betrothed wife of Abijah Dart, and under a flag of truce, the bearer of a message which you had better read before you offer him or his brother any further wrong."

Her voice rung clear as a bugle call when she spoke, and her tall, slender form was erect and haughty when she stepped forward and handed the paper to the admiral.

It was open—he saw the official seal, and his face flushed hotly while he silently read its contents.

For a minute he stood, looked at the brave girl, then at the prisoners, then he spoke:

"The captains present will go into the cabin with me for conference in the presence of this—this lady! The execution is suspended until I return. The guards, prisoners and other officers will remain as they are."

"The curse of high Heaven be on you, old man, if by word or look you insult that girl—remember!"

It was Abijah who spoke.

"British officers do not make war on women!" answered the admiral. "Lady, enter the cabin. You, at least, are safe!"

Without a word Sally Ann followed the stately admiral and his fleet captains into the cabin.

There, modest as she was brave, the fair girl answered such questions as were asked about the English prisoners and their condition. The captain of the gun brig, badly wounded, was quartered at the house of her father. His right arm had been amputated to save his life. The other wounded were in hospital under guard—the well confined in jail.

"Do you think your people would dare to execute this threat if I did not comply with their den and?" asked the admiral.

"I do not think, merely—I know it, sir! When Americans are aroused they dare everything!" was her answer.

"I believe it, or you would not be here!" said the officer, thoughtfully. "Few, if any of my countrywomen would run such a risk. Gentlemen—what say you? I will read the demand signed by the selectmen of Salem, under seal and countersigned by the daring man who sunk the brig and captured the most of her officers and crew."

There was not much delay after the paper was read in coming to a decision.

The oldest captain, next in rank to the admiral, said:

"What are the lives of these two common men when compared to those of seventy of our officers and men? I vote for their release, mortifying though it be to give them up, under a threat!"

"The Yankees are in earnest! If I hang these men, our friends will be sacrificed!" added the admiral.

The captains all coincided with the opinion of the first speaker.

"Then it is settled. We yield. Fair lady, your mission has been a success!"

The admiral had scarcely spoken, when Sally Ann, who, till now, had borne up with heroic fortitude, sank back in her chair and fainted.

"Call the surgeon, quick! steward, bring wine here! The poor girl is worn out!"

No wonder. Neither food or drink had touched her lips since tea the night before, and for hours thinly dressed, she had faced the chilling wind and blinding spray.

When, by the aid of restoratives skillfully applied, Sally Ann regained consciousness, Abijah and Elnathan Dart, unshackled, stood in the cabin by her side, free men, with permission to depart when she was able to go to her boat.

She was almost forced to take a glass of wine and some food, to give her strength to return, for all she asked was what she had already gained, the lives and release of the doomed prisoners.

In a little while she was literally "herself" again and with a large sea-cloak around her form, which the old admiral had insisted on loaning her, for he wrote to her father that he had five more young men from Salem whom he would exchange for the wounded captain of the brig-of-war if he was brought off to the care of his own surgeon—she entered the boat to return.

Elnathan Dart now held the tiller and steered, while Abijah, her betrothed, sat by her side in the stern-sheets of the boat and in low tones told her of all his hopes and fears during their late terrible trials.

With the fresh breeze nearly astern the swift shallop almost flew over the bounding waves, and in less than two hours the wharves of Salem were crowded with people ready to welcome their fairest flower, the heroine of the day, and

the men her heroism had brought back to them.

When the two brothers landed the bell on the town hall rung out a joyous peal and all Salem echoed with the glad cheers of its citizens—old and young.

A formal meeting of the selectmen was held, a vote of thanks and a hundred pounds in gold voted to Sally Ann Doolittle, who instantly turned it over to the treasury, to be used in feeding and clothing the poor of her native town.

The exchange of the wounded captain for five of their young men was agreed to without hesitation, and it was decided to send him off to the fleet early the next morning.

That night was given over to rejoicing, and in the house of brave old Tom Dart the best men and women in the town gathered to tender their congratulations.

Abijah, getting a chance to talk to Sally Ann Doolittle, pressed her hard to consent to their immediate marriage. But to this she would not listen.

"I have proven fairly well how much I love you, 'Bije,'" she said, "but while this pesky war is goin' on we've no business to marry. The place of a married man is with his wife. And now, the place for you and Elnathan is on the sloop with your father and my brother Jonathan and the rest of our brave friends who battle for their country and her rights! I can busy myself helping to clothe the well and caring for the sick and wounded. When the war is over, if we both live through it, come to me and I will not say 'nay!' This I promise you!"

He could not change her will. She was firm as she was true and brave and he had to be content.

Happy and proud were two old men that night. Tom Dart, because he had two sons who had faced an ignominious death rather than disonor his name and work treason against their townsmen and their flag—happy that his brave sons were with him again, ready to do battle with the enemies of their native land.

And Deacon Jasper Doolittle was too proud for speech almost when told how courteously his brave daughter had been treated by the British admiral and when he realized the risk she had run and how much she had accomplished.

Mrs. Doolittle had been nearly in hysterics while Sally Ann was gone; now her joy kept her nearly as bad off. As the deacon said, it was ginger-hot all around.

A crew was chosen for the shallop to take the wounded captain off, and Sally Ann, returning the sea-cloak of the admiral, sent with it several jars of preserves and pickles which, in a note, she told him had been prepared and put up by herself.

The shallop was sent, and on her return brought five more gallant boys to strengthen the crew of Long Tom's now famous sloop.

Also there came a note, with a crest and coat-of-arms on the seal, in which Admiral Dalrymple sent his thanks—"To the bravest of the brave and the fairest of the fair."

CHAPTER VII.

THE BRITISH FORM A DANGEROUS PLOT.

Not until the wounded captain of the sunken brig had been taken on board the admiral's ship, the Thunderer 74, did the admiral or the captain of the Galatea frigate have an idea of the means by which the people of Salem learned that their townsmen, the Dart boys, had been doomed to death.

It was true the marine, Peter Connolly, was missed, at morning roll-call, and the severed painter or boom-rope of the dinghy showed how he had got away. But, as he had not been seen on board speaking to the Dart boys, his disappearance did not create a suspicion of being connected with them.

He was supposed to have steered for Boston, his nearest safe landing-place, as a deserter naturally would.

But the wounded captain was a prisoner in Deacon Jasper Doolittle's house when the marine arrived with news of the peril which overhung the two Americans, and he let out the fact as soon as he arrived on the ship of the admiral.

The captain of the Galatea was present when the story was told.

"I'd give six months' pay to trap the rascally deserter and get him back aboard my frigate where he could be made an example of!" exclaimed the latter. "I used in my younger days to be a capital hand in masquerade. I've half a mind to capture some fishing-boat along the coast, make the crew prisoners, disguise myself and an equal number of trusty men in their clothes and get into Salem. Thus I could discover the approaches, learn the position and nature of the defenses and pave the way to a successful attack. And I could while there get Connolly into my power. Once in my hands he should never escape till I had him on board my frigate, a doomed man!"

The admiral smiled as he said:

"You would also have a chance to meet that lovely Yankee girl once more. I do not forget how your face flushed and your hand and voice

trembled when you pressed her so hard to take a glass of wine with you before she went ashore!"

"Admiral, your eyes are keen. I acknowledge I was rather smitten with a beauty and courage I never before saw equaled in her sex. But I would not compromise my dignity, nor endanger my life or liberty, by any foolish attachment. I never, under any circumstances, admiral, will forget my duty as an officer in his majesty's service!"

"I had no idea, captain, of touching your susceptibilities by my *badinage!*" responded the admiral, in apologetic tones. "But, truly, your plan to discover the approach to Salem and its defenses, is admirable, though very risky, for if discovered and captured you know what your fate would be!"

"Yes, an ignominious death as a spy. But it will be a glorious piece of work to capture the armed sloop which destroyed the *Dolphin* and to burn up the nest of hornets which has given us so much trouble already!"

"I'll grant my permission to try it and send some launches down the coast to capture a fishing-boat for you!" answered the admiral. "Great adventures are generally attended by equal risks!"

"That settles it, admiral. I'll undertake the enterprise as soon as a fisherman is brought to the fleet! And if I bring a Yankee bride off with my deserter, I hope you'll grant me permission to put her on my mess-list. The captain here says her father is the richest man in Salem!"

"An heiress, eh? Well, if you win her I will be the first to congratulate you!" and the admiral laughed heartily over the thought. Then he added more seriously:

"Anything which can be done to punish and annoy these audacious Yankees will be approved by me. The loss of the brig is more to us than a thousand Yankee lives are worth. And the only way to check such daring work is to destroy those who perform it. From these little harbors, their privateers can creep out, pass our fleets and work great damage among the transports off the coast. We can watch their large harbors and deep ship channels and hem their war-ships in—but in these little ports dangerous crafts can hide away and dart out as that sloop did when we are not looking for them."

Without delay, Captain Montrose of the *Galatea* took steps to carry out the plan he had imparted to the admiral. The first in hand was to procure a fishing-craft and the necessary disguises for himself and the four men he meant to share in the risky enterprise.

He sent out his launch and first cutter, well manned and armed, to search the island harbors along the coast to the southward for the vessel he wanted to use. "Strip the fishermen you find in such a craft and put them ashore!" was his order. "We want no more Yankees aboard our ship. We have had bad luck with all we've had. Be sure to keep the clothes-chests, fish-lines and nets all intact. If we play at a trade, we must have all the tools in hand."

The fleet kept well inshore most of the time, except when a gale was brewing and that heading for the land, for it was well known the frigate *Chesapeake* and other vessels were fitting for sea in Boston harbor and to keep them there was the great object of the blockade.

Therefore no fishing-boats could be found on the Banks near at hand. But below, near Buzzard's Bay, off a small rocky island, uninhabited, and bare of all vegetation except a few stunted trees and small patches of grass, the boats came suddenly upon a clinker-built sharpie of seven or eight tons' burden, decked over and with a well amidships in which to keep alive the fish they caught.

An old man with two sons-in-law and three sons, composed the crew—the old man acting as master and all hands with him holding joint ownership.

The cabin was roomy and all lived aft in it, for the forehold and forecastle were devoted to storage.

Old Captain Hurd was madder than a hornet roused from its cosey nest, when the English men-of-war's-men dashed alongside his anchored sloop and sprung on board, taking him and his crew so completely by surprise that they tumbled out of their berths in their underclothes—for they were all asleep with no watch set, anchored as they were in a sheltered cove in the island-dotted bay.

"Never mind dressing! On deck as you are!" shouted the lieutenant in command, his drawn sword in hand. "Cut down the first man who hesitates to obey orders!"

"Consarn ye! who be you and what d'ye mean?" cried the gray-haired skipper as he shivered in red flannel shirt and drawers, on his fog-inshrouded deck.

"Be silent! Keep a still tongue or you may lose the head that holds it!" thundered the officer. "We want your craft and we have her! We don't want you and ashore you all go! Into the boat with those men! Use the points of your cutlasses if they don't move quickly enough!"

"Give us our clothes and something to live on

then, you mean thievin' cusses!" cried the old man, for the younger ones were dumb from surprise or fear or a mixture of both.

It would make the bravest of men nervous to wake and find a dozen points of glittering steel at his throat.

Before they could realize it, almost, the crew of the fisher-craft, scantily clad as they were, stood amid the naked tree-growth and rocks on the island, gazing gloomily after their beloved sharpie as she sailed away in the hands of her captors.

"What'll Sally and the gals say, who look for us home to night?" groaned the old man, as he saw the boat stand northward out of sight.

"They'll think we're lost!" muttered the youngest son, a lad of eighteen, but a man in size.

"Not in weather like this; they'll think we've been taken and pressed to service in some British hulk, while we're here starving," added another son. "I thought they were going to press us when they turned us up on deck; they don't often leave able-bodied men behind."

"What can we do? We're next thing to naked; no fire, no shelter, nothin' to eat, 'thout we gobble down raw lobsters and gull's eggs!" growled the old man, bitterly. "They might at least have left us some fire."

"Dad, I don't believe the fire I built yesterday when I was ashore lookin' for scallops last night is all out. I had it in a pile of drift-wood on the beach t'other eend of the island."

"Run and see, 'Zekiel—run and see!'"

CHAPTER VIII.

A BRITISH CAPTAIN'S MASQUERADE.

"Boys, I can't afford to lay ashore and idle my time now. It cost a heap of money to fit out and arm and provision the sloop, and she and me have got to make a livin' job out of her. I'm for sea and when there we'll gobble a few of them British transports if we're lively and have luck."

This was what Long Tom said to crew and officers when he had them gathered in front of the cabin door on the *Terror*.

"We can slide out to sea, get to the southard o' them men-o'-war in the night and strike somethin' rich where they'll not be lookin' for us."

"We're ripe and ready for any work you lay out," was the answer promptly given.

"Then, if any o' you have good-byes to say, take two hours ashore to say 'em in and at dark we'll h'ist canvas and be off."

A few availed themselves of this leave—among them Abijah Dart, who wanted one more interview with his Sally Ann before he left on a perilous cruise.

But, prompt and true, every man was on board at sunset, and when the gloom of night lay heavy over land and sea, with the ebb of tide and a light wind, the sloop was unmoored and headed out seaward through the Chappel's Ledge Channel.

Long Tom was the best pilot on the coast, and though unseen, when he heard the swash of inrolling waves breaking close aboard, looking only at his compass, not even taking soundings, he said:

"Old Marblehead Rock is well out o' water now—the flood-tide will make afore we're far off-shore."

"Dad, couldn't we run through that fleet on as dark a night as this, and give the *Galatea* a poke in the ribs to pay for the way they treated us in the old hulk?"

Elnathan Dart asked this question when the heavy inrolling swell told they were outside the shoals.

"Lad, I'd like to do it, I would, by smoke, but I'm a-thinkin' if we once got in among them men-o'-war, with all their rockets and blue lights, they'd never let us get away. They'd have two hundred guns to our one, and ten men to a gun to say the least, and there wouldn't be enough o' this sloop left to kindle a kitchen fire after they got to work at us."

"Maybe you're right, dad, but I'd like to peck 'em jest once or twice, the pesky brutes! jest to show 'em they're not forgotten!"

"Hush! There's a craft a-crossin' our bows, a-beatin' in, I guess! Sloop ahoy! what sloop is that?"

"The *Orline*, *smack*, from Buzzard's Bay, a-fishin' long shore!" came back in a gruff voice. "Who be you?"

"The *Terror*, Captain Tom Dart, off on a cruise. Is old man *Hurd* aboard the *Orline*?"

"Ay, and all the boys!" was the answer, as the fisher-boat vanished in the gloom.

"Look out for Archer's Rock; you're headin' right for it!" cried Long Tom, in a tone of friendly warning.

"Ay—ay—thank'ee!" came back in a tone almost lost by distance.

Little did Tom Dart or any of his crew dream that a captain in the royal navy had just slipped by them, instead of "old man *Hurd*" and his boys, and that by timely warning they had actually put an enemy into the right channel when told where Archer's Rock bore in the same.

"What an escape! 'Twas the armed sloop

which sunk our brig!" gasped Captain Montrose to the coxswain of his gig, who was his best man and acting mate of the captured boat.

"Yes, sir, and she is out on more mischief. 'Tis a pity they couldn't know it out in the fleet and get after her!"

"True; but she will sail two fathoms to our one, and it is too late to give over the enterprise I have begun."

"Breakers—close ahead!" cried out a man in the bows of the sloop.

"Hard down the helm! Tack for the other side of the channel!" cried the captain. "That is the rock that old sinner warned us to look out for!"

The boat had now entered the narrow channel and had to tack quite frequently, warned by the sound of breakers as she came near the reefs or shore.

She was well in by the point of land when a sharp hail from shore reached the ears of the English masqueraders.

"What craft is that, and where from?" was the cry.

"Fishing-smack Orlane—Buzzard's Bay!" answered Montrose.

"Old man Hurd aboard—hey?"

"No; I've bought him out. Him and the boys are buildin' a schooner!" answered the captain.

"Everybody seems to know old Hurd. I'll have to drop his name!" he added, *sotto voce*.

"Who be you?" asked the speaker, as the sloop went around on the off-shore tack.

"Josh Spriggins, from the Vineyard!"

"Sho! Sorry old Hurd isn't aboard; he's an old friend o' mine. I'll see you in the mornin' when my turn in the battery is out."

"So! Another escape! We are close under one of their batteries," muttered the captain, as he stood off.

The lights of the town now were in plain sight, and within the hour the smack was brought to an anchor close to a long wharf.

Leaving three men on board, with the sails loose so that if it was necessary he could slip cable and be off at a minute's notice, the captain went on shore in the skiff which he towed astern.

He wanted to look the town over by night, when curious eyes could not scan him too closely. Though dressed in the coarse garb of a fisherman, he was not well enough used to the character to play the part with such fidelity as to defy scrutiny if suspicion was once aroused by his words or actions.

Leaving his two men in the skiff, with orders to remain there till he returned, he sauntered up into the town and looked into two or three bar-rooms which did not seem to be at all crowded.

Into one of the dingiest of these he walked, and taking a seat in a dark corner called for a mug of beer.

It was brought to him by a yellow-haired boy, of whom he asked if he knew where Deacon Doolittle lived.

"Guess I do. Next house round the corner—picket fence in front, dog in yard, chained up, tho', for he bites when he's loose—bit me once, drat his poison skin!"

Montrose paid for his beer, drank it off, gave the boy an extra six-pence and went out as the latter said:

"Thankee, mister; guess you're new in this town. Our folks isn't much on givin'; they're as stingy as bean-soup."

He passed around the corner, saw the house with the picket-fence in front and he heard the growl of the chained dog when he got near the yard.

He saw more. It was a well-remembered face and form—that of the heroic girl who had dared so much to save the life of her lover and gain his liberty.

She stood alone—near the window, and the light of a large lamp on a table upon which she rested one hand so fell on her face and form that he could study her beauty while himself unobserved.

"Lovely—very lovely!" he muttered. "It would be a shame such beauty were left in a dull provincial town, when it should shine amid the splendors of a great metropolis. She is a prize worth risking life to gain. How to gain an interview and remain myself unknown—that is the question. And to learn where that deserter, Connolly, is—that is another important point."

Passing up the street he paused where a creaking sign with a white swan painted upon it betokened an inn, or house of entertainment. Meeting an old man near the door he asked if it was a good place to lodge.

"Guess 'tis!" was the answer. "Widder Jennings—she keeps it. Got two sons, jest gone to sea with Long Tom Dart. Keeps folks well, I reckon; never heard 'em grumble."

Glancing in at the open door, he saw the very man he wanted to see—the marine Connolly, but he was not in uniform. He had on the suit which old Deacon Doolittle had given him on the night he landed. He was seated at a table with a hot punch before him talking to two old men who seemed much interested in what he was saying.

Montrose dared not go in there. The sitting-

room was well lighted, and if once the marine penetrated his disguise, his escape would not be easy. He walked on, thinking over his best plan of action.

"I've got it!" he said, after full ten minutes of serious thought. "I saw some uniforms in a second-hand clothing shop down the street. I'll buy a suit and play recruiting officer, in the morning. I'll go down and send the sloop off to the fishing-banks with orders to come in after me, to-morrow night. And I'll spread a net to-morrow which will take my game, if my nerve holds out as I think it will!"

An hour later, a soldier with sergeant's chevrons on his arms, entered a cheap lodging-house near the White Swan tavern, and took a bed for the night. He had a ferocious mustache and side whiskers, wore a long sword and walked with a swaggering air, when he entered, called for a pot of beer, some bread and cheese and a bed—throwing down the price of all in hard silver with the air of an old veteran.

"Men plenty, 'round here?" he asked of a slatternly-looking woman who waited on him.

"Men creetur's is nation scarce!" she replied. "The best on 'em is all gone to the army, or off to sea. Some lazy, shiftless things, like my old man drunk on the settee there, hang 'round, but they're no 'count as *men*!"

"Twill be a poor place to start a recruiting office then!" he said.

"Guess you've hit it—nation poor! Might try it, though. I'll board a good-lookin' chap like you cheap. I'll board you a month for nothin' if you'll coax my old man to 'list. He's no good here—only in the way—not worth the salt he eats!"

"I'll try, madam. It is a pity so fine a looking woman, should be tied down to a worthless man!"

"La sakes! You don't call me good-lookin'?"

"Indeed I do, madam—you would be handsome if you had no trouble on your mind and were dressed up as you deserve to be!"

"La sakes! Be you a *captain*?"

"No, madam—only a sergeant as yet, though I am promised a commission as soon as I recruit a company!"

"Dear me—I'll help you all I can. La sakes, if I only had such a man as you be, instead of that old mud-turtle! Take another pot o' beer—do—it's my treat!"

The beer was stale and bitter, but it was swallowed, and then the captain retired—confident that he had found a strong ally in that house to aid him in his future plans.

He slept well, rose early and looked out from his chamber window, which fronted the harbor.

His sloop had left the harbor as he had directed, and was anchored off on the fishing-banks in sight of town.

He dressed very carefully, so arranging his new disguise that he felt sure of deceiving even Connolly, the marine, if he met him, and went down to breakfast.

He hardly knew the landlady now. Her hair was neatly combed and braided—her face shone with a fresher color, her form was clad in the best dress she owned. A few words of praise or flattery had worked wonders with her.

She had sent her bear-eyed husband off out of the way—to Beverly after beans, she remarked, as she poured out the coffee for her guest.

"This chicken is broiled to a turn, and your johnny-cake is just delicious, my dear madam!" said the pseudo-sergeant.

"I'm counted first chop at cookin'!" said the delighted woman. "I'm glad you like things the way I do 'em. My old man is always a-grumblin' and growlin' and never suited!"

"The brute—I'll enlist him and get him where powder and lead will improve his taste or end it altogether!"

"I hope to gracious you will! And if he should die and I'm left a widow, I'll be a good chance for somebody. I've got nigh onto three thousand dollars of my own laid away!"

"You would be a treasure alone, if you had not a dollar in the world!"

"La sakes! How you do talk!"

The return of the "old man" from Beverly with a bag of beans caused the conversation at this time to take a different turn.

After breakfast, a large placard, written in a bold hand, was posted on the sign-post in front of the house.

Sergeant Trefoil wanted recruits for the army of General Brown, then at Sackett's Harbor. He would remain in Salem one week to receive them.

And he at once made a dead set for the "old man" whom the landlady wanted to get rid of so badly. He had three glasses of New England rum down his throat within half an hour, and began to pour *patriotism* into his ears by the yard. The country needed every truly brave man within her borders. And the old man began to feel as if he was the bravest of the brave, and each glass raised his stamina as it went down. The country surely needed him, and—Well, he was Sergeant Trefoil's first recruit.

The landlady, too happy for expression, went out and told every man she met that a brave and handsome sergeant at her house was offering great inducements for enlistment.

Private Connolly, late of the Royal Marines, dropped in, took the bait, got a dollar down for beer money, and was promised a corporal's stripes in Co. A, First Regiment U. S. Infantry. He was recruit number two, and confident now in the perfection of his disguise, Sergeant Trefoil assumed more airs and enlarged the sphere of his audacity.

By quiet inquiry, he learned how the small fort below was garrisoned, how many batteries were planted to cover the harbor and how they were manned, and last but not least, just how the prisoners taken from the brig-of-war were placed and guarded.

This much accomplished he had but one more desire just then. It was to meet and to try and make an impression on the fair girl whom he had determined to possess at whatever cost fate willed.

Making his duty an excuse, he called on Deacon Doolittle late in the afternoon to ask his influence in inducing men to enlist.

The deacon, impressed with the military air of his visitor, and pleased with his patriotic sentiments, invited him to stay to supper, and as a matter of course, introduced him to his wife and daughter.

To the latter the sergeant paid marked attention, endeavoring in a manner almost too courtly for the character he assumed, to interest her in himself. He spoke of the battles he had passed through, of his love for the country he served, and delicately hinted that none but the brave could appreciate the fair.

His advances were met courteously, but as the evening drew on, for he staid after supper, he began to notice that the fair girl received his attentions more and more coldly, the warmer he grew.

The deacon excused himself after supper; he had to meet the council on town business, and left the sergeant with the ladies.

Mrs. Doolittle had household affairs to attract her attention, and to his joy the visitor was at last alone with the lovely girl.

The hour was late—he had not counted time, and now he meant to improve it by a declaration of love.

He was just framing an impassioned speech in his mind, and would have spoken in a moment more, when Deacon Doolittle came hurriedly to the door, and said:

"Sally, dear, the ship *Terror* has just dropped anchor. I'll run down to see what's brought Cap'n Dart back so soon."

"Heavens! I am lost!" cried Captain Montrose, in his natural voice, springing to his feet, realizing his peril in a moment.

"A spy!" she exclaimed, as she rose and tore the false beard from his face.

"No, lady—no! Only a man so madly in love with you that he has risked his life for it."

CHAPTER IX.

THE GAME OF LOVE AND HAZARD.

In love with a Yankee girl—you, an Englishman?" exclaimed the indignant girl.

"Yes; your beauty, your heroism so impressed me when you came like an angel of mercy to my ship, that my heart went out in wild admiration for you! I could not master my passion or drive you from my mind, and I have risked life, liberty—all—all just to see you again! Let them come—I can but die!"

He folded his arms on his broad chest, a sad smile lighted his really handsome face, for now, with his false beard out of the way, he looked the gentleman, and of noble blood, that he really was.

"This—this to me when you know I am betrothed to a man whom I rescued from your ship?"

"Yes—for my love knows no bounds—it is madness; but I shall pay the penalty. Your friends will soon be here and I—can die—die for you!"

"It shall not be! You are brave, and though an enemy to my native land, I will hide you, and find some means by which you can go back to your fleet. Quick! quick! come with me, or you are lost. I hear cheering down the street; the crew of the *Terror* must have landed!"

With a light step she left the room, passed out through the hall, and entered a garden in the rear of the house.

"There"—she cried, pointing to a low building made of brick—small and without windows—"it is our tool-house. Go in! Here is the key; lock yourself inside and wait till you hear from me. I will throw pursuit on a wrong track!"

"Generous girl! If I accept life and liberty, it is to save you pain!"

"No more, sir—no more! I must be in the house, if visitors come!"

And, literally pushing him into the doorway, she hurried back to the room she had left, and got back none too soon, for she had just taken a seat by her work-stand, when her father, accompanied by Captain Dart, his two sons and her brother Jonathan, entered the apartment.

"Why, captain, how is it you are back so soon? Have you taken a prize already?" she asked.

"No, by the eternal smoke!" answered the old man. "We expected to find Salem afire, or

some 'tarnal mischief goin' on, for we got on the track of p'ison work and were afeard you all were in trouble here! Away to the south'ard, nigh to the Vineyard, we found old man Hurd and his boys, half-naked and starving on a chunk o' rocks where the Britishers left 'em after stealin' their smack, the Orlane. And goin' out, night afore last, we met the same smack a-comin' in here and pretendin' old Hurd was aboard with his boys. So we came back, an' lucky 'twas we did, for we've got the smack and five of the thieves. But the boss o' the crowd, a *cap'n*, they say, is ashore here, somewhere now. We're goin' to look the town over for him and when we get him, he'll stretch rope as a *spy*, by the eternal smoke!"

"Where is that recruitin' sergeant, Sally Ann? He was here when I looked in, a half-hour ago!" asked the deacon.

"He went away, right after you!" answered the girl, quietly—"I suppose to his lodgings. I don't want any more soldiers introduced here. They're awful tiresome. Can't talk of anything but drills, reviews and battles!"

"He'll not come around much while 'Bijah is here!" observed the old deacon, laughing.

Then he agreed with Long Tom Dart and the young men to take the rounds of the town in search of the British captain.

The instant they were gone, Sally Ann hurried out to the tool-house, and knocking at the door called the captain out.

"You must get away from here and that with speed!" she announced. "The men who came with you are captured, and parties are searching all over the place for you. If taken, nothing can save you from the fate of a *spy*!"

"How can I escape? The boat I came in must be captured with the crew!"

"Go down a lane in the rear of this garden till you reach the water. At a little pier you will find a small skiff, with two oars and a sail in it. It is mine. Take it, push out in the channel and let it drift out in the ebb tide, which will run for two or three hours more. Lay down in the bottom of the boat; keep still, even if you hear a hail, and the current will take you clear. It is your only chance to get away. The least noise of oars or sail would draw attention, and you could never get off. Away, now! Do not delay a moment!"

"Angel of goodness—how can I reward you? Wear this ring for my sake!"

"No, sir, nothing from *you*! You owe me nothing. Go—go while you can! You cannot mistake; the lane is straight and narrow, and the boat lies at our private pier!"

He pressed her hand to his lips and hurried off in the direction she pointed out.

The noise of parties of men tramping rapidly over the brick pavements of the place reached his ears as he stole off through the quiet lane.

Realizing his own peril, grieving for the fate of the men he had brought with him, the British officer was not long in reaching the water-side.

He found the pier, and, groping about in the darkness, secured the rope which held the boat alongside. Into the boat he hurried, and giving it a push off into the channel, found, as the girl had told him, the tide at a strong ebb. Seeing that the boat moved noiselessly out on the current, he lay down, as she had advised, and let the little craft drift.

He passed vessels at anchor, and people on shore so near he could hear them talking, but the night was dark, and the boat was unseen. It was a hard ordeal to keep still when oars and a sail were under his hands, but he knew only too well if discovered in the harbor he would never get away.

So, for nearly two hours he drifted, till the lights of the town were dim in the far distance, and all immediate danger seemed to have been left behind.

Then he stepped the short mast, drew the sheet of the lug-sail aft, and, heading for the distant fleet, steered out to sea.

His heart was heavy; he had gained comparatively nothing, and had lost five of the best men of his crew.

True—if he could induce the admiral to let him try it—he had gained a knowledge of the entrance to the port which might avail him in avoiding the batteries and leading in a force to cut out the sloop, and endeavor to rescue the prisoners from the jail as well as to secure the person of Connolly, the deserter.

An expedition like this was on his mind, when, as day was dawning, he luffed his skiff alongside the admiral's ship to report his return.

"Ha! Montrose, back, alone and in a skiff? How is this? Where are your fisher-sloop and the men you took with you?"

This was the exclamation of Admiral Dalrymple, when Montrose, sad and dispirited, stood in his cabin and reported the manner of his return.

"Boat and men in the hands of the enemy, and had I not found pity and mercy at the hands of the brave girl that elicited your admiration as well as mine, I suppose I would now be swinging from one of the Salem elms. They were after me, hot-foot, when she gave me directions how to find her boat, and started me

from a hiding-place where I had been concealed by her. Had we not met our evil genius, Long Tom Dart, when we were going into the port, all our plans would have culminated successfully. He had passed your fleet to the southward—found the fishermen left on the rock, and got an inkling of our expedition, and he returned in time to thwart me!"

"It is bad—perplexing, to say the least. Ill-fortune seems to come to us in every way from that town. I would like to see it ablaze!"

"You shall, admiral, if you will let me head a force to do the work. I can run well inshore, after dark, with my frigate and two or three of our lightest vessels, land a strong force to take the batteries by assault in the rear, and then the town is at our mercy. I can take any vessels I find in the harbor, while we can cut them off if they try to get outside."

"I will consider the plan if you make out a detail, specifying what force you think necessary," responded the admiral. "The recapture of our men is a very desirable object."

CHAPTER X.

A TERRIBLE NIGHT'S WORK.

"WHERE, oh, where has that handsome lodger of mine, Sergeant Trefoil, gone?"

Thus wailed Mrs. Jennie Boggs, when the recruiting sergeant, having remained away all night, failed to make his appearance at her well-stocked breakfast-table in the morning. She sent her blear-eyed old man around town to hunt him up. Of course the search was vain.

He had last been seen at the house of Deacon Doolittle; from thence all trace of him was lost. One person, and that a woman who could keep a secret, only knew just when and how he had disappeared.

Private Peter Connolly wanted to see him, also. He wanted to be assigned to the service for which he had enlisted, for his funds were short and a board bill on the daily increase. But the sergeant did not show up. Neither could the lost captain of the smack Orlane be found, though Long Tom Dart and his men looked the town over, high and low, for him.

When the skiff from Deacon Doolittle's private pier was missed, and it was found her fastenings had been *cut* instead of being unfastened in the usual way, it was evident who ever had taken her was in a hurry. And Long Tom and his boys concluded that the man who had left in a hurry was the missing British captain.

They had tried hard to force from the captured crew of the stolen smack the reason of the risky venture their captain had made in visiting Salem. They were not in his confidence, and only knew that he had found his way in without a pilot, landed and then sent them off to keep out of the way on the fishing-banks until he was ready to go off with them, as he undoubtedly would have done had not they been captured.

A long conference was held by the town council, with Captain Tom Dart present, and it was decided to adopt extra precautions to strengthen the batteries and defend the town. For this captain, in his disguise, evidently had been in the town long enough to learn how it was prepared for defense, and if he had gone back to the fleet, he might carry off information which would encourage the British to a descent upon the town and an attempt to rescue the prisoners.

If he had visited the town for any other object than to discover its means of defense, no clew was left to show what that other object was. Sally Ann Doolittle kept her knowledge to herself. For she could not divulge it without incurring blame for letting a *spy* escape, if spy he was.

Unused to the ways of men of gallantry, she believed his story—that he had incurred all his danger on *her* account, led away by what seemed a mad and uncontrollable love. And not for the world would she have had her Abijah know that any man besides him had ever spoken of love to her.

The batteries were visited, inspected and the force attending them increased at night. A patrol was ordered on the outer beach from sunset to sunrise.

To make the harbor more secure, two patrol-boats were ordered to row to and fro across the channel, in alternate turns, the entire night.

The crew of the Terror were ordered to remain on board, with loaded guns, and arms ready for service, and a full watch—half the crew on deck all the time.

"If the enemy do come, they'll not catch us a-nappin', by the eternal smoke!" averred old Tom, as he ordered his long guns to be loaded with bags of musket-balls for use at close quarters.

Old man Hurd, and his sons and sons-in-law, volunteered to remain and help those who had recovered the fishing-smack for them, so that, with everybody on the alert to receive an attack, it was not likely such an event would meet with much success.

A couple of days and nights went by and no

signs of any unusual movement among the men-of-war off the coast was seen, though they were closely watched.

"I'll wait four-and-twenty hours longer," said Captain Dart, talking with the old deacon on shore, "and if there's no fun goin' on here by *that* time, I'm goin' down the coast, where I can find some! The British are ravaging the country fearfully, the papers say, down on the Chesapeake and up the rivers in Maryland and Virginia, and with my sloop in them shoal waters, I could just rake 'em down with their floatillas as they call 'em!"

Jonathan Doolittle, who had just come ashore, reported, while his father and the captain were together, that a frigate and three sloops-of-war had left the main fleet off Boston and stood off northward just before sunset, but they were under scant canvas, and evidently were not off on an extended cruise.

They were off the coast not more than six or seven miles when night set in, and, as it was cloudy, with no moon, they could easily come closer in, unseen, if there was any mischief planned.

"It's flood tide till near midnight. If an attack is intended, 'twill be in boats, and on flood!" decided Long Tom. "Go back aboard and keep wide awake; I'll be off in a little while!"

It was a fitting night for a hidden attack.

There was but little wind; the sea was calm; a mist came in from the northeast almost like a rain, and the darkness, in consequence, was intense.

The patrol-boats, with muffled oars were out, and in twos, picked men walked the beach which fronted the two batteries near the point which covered the ship channel in.

It was well for Salem these wise precautions had been taken. Two hours before midnight, the men who rowed the outside patrol, heard the dip of many oars beyond them.

Their orders were to pull in, join the other boat and warn the battery men in a case like this, so as to be out of range of fire themselves, if the batteries opened on an enemy and none but an enemy would come on stealthily with a force.

Falling swiftly back, the alarm had just been passed, when the shout of the shore patrol rung out clear and sharp:

"Boats ahoy! Keep off or we fire!"

"Pull, men! Dash on! We're near the point we seek!" cried a clear, strong voice, and the dash of a hundred rushing prows could be heard as the British seamen responded to the call.

In a second a half-dozen rockets from the two batteries went hissing over the water, and, aiming by their light, great guns and small-arms told the attacking force that the *surprise* was a failure!

With a wild and united burst of cheers, the English dashed to the shore, and the patrols, firing as they ran, retreated to the batteries which now poured forth a terrible shower of grape and canister, sweeping the approaches by land and the channel leading to the port.

Of course to some extent it was a random fire, but the crash of shot as boats were struck, and yells of wounded men followed, told that even the darkness could not shield the enemy from the vigilance of those they came to assail.

The bells in town rung out the loud alarm, and while the boats dashed on up the channel, the glare of rockets revealed their position and a terrible fire swept the water from the little point fort, and the two water batteries and musketry from other points.

The British boats, with marines in the bows of every one, now also opened fire, while they still dashed on, and it seemed as if in numbers alone they would overwhelm the townsmen, they were so many.

The Terror, with her large gun booming like a burst of thunder, now revealed her position, and a dozen boats from the dark column sweeping on headed directly for her.

But from her deck, like a volcano emitting fire, came a fusilade from swivels, muskets and old Ebenezer's yawning mouth, which tore through the column with fearful effect, shattering boats and disabling men; still some kept on, and the men who had been on board the Galatea knew well the voice which shouted:

"Board, my brave lads! Board the sloop and she is ours!"

"Never, by the eternal smoke!" shouted Long Tom, as he sighted Ebenezer himself on the boat from which the order came, and fired again.

As the scythe of the mower cuts the swath, so that deadly shower of musket-balls tore down all before it, and not a boat was near the sloop when a blue light threw its glare over the water.

But shattered planks and struggling men in the water told where boats had been, and how terrible the fate of those who filled them.

Firing slackened from astern now, and it seemed as if the attack was abandoned. But suddenly, in the rear of the batteries, cheering was heard, and a fire, sharp and furious from musketry, revealed that an attempt was being

made to take the guns. But even this had been anticipated, and some large guns as well as plenty of small-arms were trained to the rear to meet the rush of the foe.

Not long could this last. The enemy, who had hoped to surprise and overpower in the sudden night attack, were met on every hand by men prepared to die, but not to yield, and the desperation of the defense appalled men who had been accustomed to achieve victories instead of meeting repulse.

It was well the tide ebbed at midnight to help the disheartened and shattered column of boatmen off out of the fire which had proved so deadly to them in their adventure. But for that few of the shattered and crippled boats would ever have reached the ships outside, which lying off at long gun-shot from shore, dared not open with their batteries for fear of killing their own people in the boats.

As soon as it was evident that the enemy had given over the attack, boats were sent out from the shore and from such vessels as were in port to pick up the wounded, who clinging to oars or shattered boats, shrieked for help from the water.

These were mostly taken to the hospital ashore, and when it was full, to private houses to be cared for as soon as the surgeon could get around to them.

Many of the dead and dying were swept out to sea by the ebbing tide to find a sepulture not digged by human hands—an ocean burial with seaweed for a shroud.

Not until day dawned could the people of Salem, and the men in the little fort and at the batteries, realize what a formidable attack had been repulsed. The *dbris* of boats destroyed, the bodies of their enemies as well as their own dead and wounded, told the terrible story.

Enough men had been sent in from the British fleet to have overwhelmed the Americans had the latter been taken by surprise. And Montrose, really a very brave officer, had led them with a courage worthy of a better cause.

As soon as their boats had got back to the war-ships, those nearest in opened fire on the fort and batteries, but the distance was too great for damage and they soon ceased firing, while one vessel was seen to make sail as if to report the failure of the attack to the admiral.

Singularly, among the seriously wounded, picked up in the harbor and carried on shore, was Captain Montrose who was borne into the large sitting-room of Mrs. Jennie Boggs, where he had lodged while disguised as Sergeant Trefoil, in which character he had won her warm admiration, to say the least.

She did not recognize the smooth, pallid face of the wounded officer—for the sergeant had a magnificent mustache and whiskers which added much to his military dignity in her eyes. But of some dozen wounded men and officers quartered on her, she paid the most attention to the wounded captain; he had such fine expressive eyes and her "old man," whom she both hated and despised, looked out of red, watery orbs, sickening to the sight.

Every doctor in Salem and some sent over from Boston, were busied that day in attending to the wounded on both sides, and the women of the little town in their kindness of heart acted as volunteer nurses, doing all they could for the sufferers, forgetting they were enemies, while they saw them helpless and in pain.

Among those who came to render service to the wounded, in the house of Mrs. Jennie Boggs, was Miss Sally Ann Doolittle. She appeared there with a large pail of broth and some wine which she had brought from home.

A startled look flashed over her face when she bent over the cot on which Montrose was laid. Fortunately, he was in a dark corner of the room and no one else was very near when the mutual recognition occurred.

"I thought you had seen enough of peril in this town without venturing here again!" she said in a low tone.

"It is fate! I am content, if I die near you!" he whispered—he was too weak to speak aloud.

"Hush! It must not be known that we have met before!" she answered. "Your life would not be worth the asking for, if it was known you had been through this town in disguise, doubtless preparing for the mad attack in which your people have been repulsed; you are punished by failure and your wounds, or I would feel tempted to expose you!"

He made no reply. He felt the justice of her words, and the agony he suffered in his mind was greater than that of his shattered body.

He closed his eyes, and in silence waited for her to move on and leave him in his suffering. But, she was not one to exhibit inhumanity, even to one who deserved punishment so much as he.

She prepared a bowl of broth, and with her own fair hands fed the weak and helpless man. She gave him a little wine, and then passed on to assist others. She was satisfied that, for his own sake, he would keep his secret and her own.

When the rank and importance of Captain Montrose was discovered, Deacon Doolittle, as the head of the Town Council, wanted him re-

moved to his house, but, to his surprise, this was opposed by his daughter.

She did not want their house made a "hospital!" she declared.

She had made no objection to the introduction of three wounded men from the Terror, however, perhaps because Abijah Dart, with a bullet in his shoulder, was one of them.

When Mrs. Boggs was told she had a *real* captain under her roof—though he was British—she paid him great attention, and in doing so discovered what lovely eyes he had—eyes very like those of the handsome sergeant, whose strange disappearance she had mourned.

Montrose was very cautious, and scarcely spoke when she was near him, fearful that she might recognize him as her former lodger, and by her demonstrations place him in a worse situation than that he then occupied.

During the day a boat from the Galatea was sent in, under a flag of truce, with some surgeons from the fleet, to offer attendance on the wounded of their people and to learn, if possible, what officers were alive of those who had not returned in the boats.

The surgeons were told their services were not needed, but a list of the prisoners and their rank, as far as could be learned, was furnished to the officer who came in with the flag.

This was done so that the enemy might know the loss in killed and missing, and be aware of what the Americans held as prisoners of war for exchange.

Though Salem had lost some of her own brave sons in the night's battle, and had several wounded to care for, the loss of the defeated enemy was so much greater that rejoicing rather than mourning filled the hearts of the excited people.

The town was all alive with visitors from Boston, Beverly and other places in the vicinity, come to see the results of the battle.

CHAPTER XI.

LONG TOM'S FIRE PICTURE.

To say that Admiral Dalrymple raved with anger at the signal and disastrous failure of the night attack on Salem is "drawing it" very mild.

He could not conceive how over four hundred well-armed and splendidly-officered seamen and marines could be repulsed, scattered and almost annihilated. Montrose had been so confident of surprising, capturing and actually turning their own batteries on the town, that he took gunners unarmed from his ship to man and work the captured cannon.

Instead of surprising the Americans, he found them ready for him, and his boats under fire before they had landed any of the force which was intended for the assault.

Not until he learned how gallantly Captain Montrose had led the boat column in person, and had been desperately wounded when in the act of boarding the dreaded as well as hated Terror, had he ceased pouring out blame upon the captain for his failure.

Then his stern heart relented, and he said:

"His bravery redeems his failure to succeed. Poor fellow! At all costs his liberty must be gained and he restored to his command."

Remembering the paper which brave Sally Doolittle had brought to him when she came to save the life of her doomed lover and that of his brother, he caused his secretary to find it, and when it was found, he looked over the names that had been signed to it.

"Jasper Doolittle, President of the Town Council," he said as he passed the names in review. "He is the man who evidently has most weight there. I will send a flag in with an offer that should reach his soul if he has one. I must have not less than fifty or sixty impressed Americans in my fleet. Perhaps more. I will exchange a certain number for every commissioned officer they hold, and make it even on privates. I, too, will give them an alternative. If they do not consent to the exchange I will land a force too heavy for them to resist, under cover of my guns in the broad light of day, and sweep their town with sword and flame. They shall find when I do strike, that I strike to destroy."

To make a greater impression he caused a couple of his smartest frigates to close in near to the mouth of Boston Bay, to keep a strict watch there on vessels that he knew would run out, if the way was left clear, and then threw all the rest of his fleet in front of Salem, in close order, and as near as he could safely come.

"They'll be sure I mean *action* now," he said to his flag captain, as the two paced the quarter-deck of his ponderous ship, with three tiers of guns on a side.

Selecting two of his staff officers, the captain and a lieutenant, he ordered them to bear the letter he wrote under his own hand and seal, going in full uniform, in his fleet barge, with a flag of truce in the bow and his fleet colors aft.

The letter was directed to Jasper Doolittle, Esquire, President of the Council of Salem town.

With glasses it could be seen that the people on shore were actively engaged in strengthening their works of defense, and that men seemed

to be coming from other parts to join the heroic defenders of the place.

Flags flew proudly over the fort near the Point and over the batteries, while in the town itself there was abundant proof that the people were full of fire and patriotism.

The barge was manned, and with the richly-uniformed officers in the stern-sheets, pulled grandly in toward the harbor.

A boat, bearing a similar emblem, was seen coming out to meet the barge.

It was evident that the defenders did not intend to give their enemies the least chance of a daylight inspection of their channels and fortifications.

"The long-headed Yankees know more of the rules of war than I gave them credit for!" confessed the admiral. "I told Captain Marvine to keep his eyes open and mark every point he could see, for we might need all the knowledge he could gain. Their boat will meet him before he even enters the channel to the harbor. I hoped they would let him go right up to the town without hindrance. Ah—he lays on his oars; the other boat is alongside his and they are in conference. As I live, they take my messenger in *their* boat! I'll guarantee he is blindfolded! They row toward the town, leaving the barge where it is—fairly under the guns of their granite fort! Cool—cool as icebergs, they know just how to meet our advances!"

Anxiously the admiral walked his deck, for he knew that his proposal was before men as little addicted to trifling as he was. And for the sake of his own good name with the Admiralty at home, he wanted to recover the men and officers now in the power of the Americans, and that without a chance of further reverses. Ill-fortune had befallen every move so far, in front of the little town, famed for its early hasty of witchcraft and heresy.

An hour passed; then he saw the American boat returning to his barge and in her the officers whom he had sent with his letter.

Impatiently the fleet commander paced his quarter-deck until the barge was nearly alongside; then he went into his cabin to receive the report of his officers, in privacy.

Captain Marvine looked annoyed. He had been blindfolded, taken ashore without a chance to see anything, until in the presence of the Town Council, in a small room; there he was confronted by Jasper Doolittle and Long Tom Dart, the famous captain of the Terror.

The letter he bore was read aloud and then—at the suggestion of the famous Captain Long Tom—it was decided by vote to take twenty-four hours to consider the proposal before responding!

Within that time an answer would be sent off to the admiral.

After much pleading, the captain was allowed to see and speak with his wounded friend, Captain Montrose, whom he found in a very bad condition, though as tenderly cared for as could be expected under the circumstances.

Of course the latter was not told the object of the visit of Captain Marvine, but he might suspect its nature since he was told to come with a flag of truce.

"So we must air our heels for four-and-twenty hours to suit the cool audacity of these *Provincials*," said the admiral, angrily. "If I could lay my fleet only two miles nearer shore, I would call for an answer with my guns. So—you saw Montrose? Has he lost heart? Does he give way to his misfortune?"

"He was very weak and his spirits low. I could say nothing with the Yankees present to comfort him," was the answer.

"Poor fellow, I am sorry for him. Defeat was worse than death to a man of his nature."

"What on earth did you want to put off our answer to the admiral's letter for? We could have made up our minds in ten minutes—jest what to say."

Thus Deacon Doolittle addressed Captain Dart, after the latter had succeeded in getting the delay voted, and the British messenger had been sent back to his barge as he came, blindfolded and under guard.

"I'll show you, deacon, afore the time is up. I had jest come ashore to tell you and the council of a plan o' mine—made up by me and your son Jonathan, which would have been knocked higher than a kite if you had agreed to what he wanted. You'd have sp'iled jest the slickest game that ever was got up, by smoke. That's why I wanted you all to hold on and not jump into plans to suit him."

"What plan? Can't you let it out?"

"Not jest yet. We've got to work fast and sly, and if we don't make old Dalrymple dance afore we're through you may kick me from Halifax to Cape Horn—you may, by smoke. I lost three good men, killed last night, and a half-dozen laid up with wounds, and have a small bill for damages to put in afore you shake hands with the old sea-dog. If you'll all keep quiet, I'll show you the purtiest picture atween now an' midnight you ever laid eyes on. Till then, keep your own counsel, and after you've seen my show, it'll be time to send in *your* answer."

The deacon and his colleagues had to be content, for when old Tom got his course laid noth-

ing could turn him aside the breadth of a single hair.

Tom hurried off to his sloop as soon as the conference ended, and soon after came on shore with his lieutenant and about twenty able-bodied men.

At the end of the principal wharf in town lay two sloops nearly as large as the Terror—without crews or cargo, laid up in consequence of the blockade and lack of trade to engage in.

In a warehouse, but a little way up the street, there was a large stock of tar, pitch, rosin, oakum and other naval stores—all of an inflammable nature.

With carts, wheel-barrows and wagons, Captain Dart began filling up the holds of these sloops with the contents of the store-house. He had laid his plans before the owner, a wealthy and patriotic man, and the latter told him to take all he wanted without hesitation.

By dark, the holds and decks of both sloops were covered. Then to each sloop a crew of six men, with an officer was assigned. Jonathan Doolittle was put in charge of one—Elnathan Dart in charge of the other.

A sharp, fast-rowing whale-boat was fastened astern of each vessel.

And, just as soon as night set in, with the Terror in the lead, the three sloops made sail and crept out past the point and up the inshore channel, to the eastward, in silence, showing no light, heading for a position dead to windward of the English fleet which had anchored, with furled sails, just out of cannon-shot from shore.

Only Long Tom Dart and the men engaged in all this work fully understood what the daring mariner intended to do.

His officers and the picked crew knew exactly what was expected of them and were prepared to carry out his orders to the most minute point.

Meantime Jasper Doolittle and his colleagues waited, with feverish anxiety, for the picture Long Tom had promised to show them.

It was near midnight, when, out where the British fleet had been anchored, at sunset, a couple of small flashing lights were seen to rise up as if out of the sea.

Scarce a minute later, with flames rising fore and aft, each under a single sail, close to windward of the anchored fleet, the two sloops laden with naval stores were seen—the blaze so lighting up the scene that every British ship stood out in as plain view as if the light of day was on her.

Rolling in flame the sloops dashed on. No crew on board now, nor any needed, for, with helms wedged amidships, their courses did not change.

And, though unseen in the darkness of the inner channel, the great gun of the Terror, now in close range for it, opened fire upon the Thunderer, which seemed doomed, for the head sloop, all ablaze, bore fairly down upon her.

The other sloop, not half a cable's-length away, bore down on another seventy-four, and while men were seen rushing aloft to loose sail, others fired rapid shots as if to try and sink the fire-ships which came down before wind and tide upon them.

"If that isn't a pictur' worth a-seein', there never was one!" cried the old deacon, dancing in glee, as he heard shot after shot from the Terror's mighty gun fired in swift succession.

"Long Tom forever! He can see to hit 'em, every time, but the Britishers can't tell where to pepper *him*! Ah—the big ship is on fire! The admiral—the admiral has got his answer sooner than he thought he would!"

CHAPTER XII.

IN LUCK ONCE MORE.

"No, 'tis a smaller vessel, under sail. See, the big ship is firing all her guns at once to try and sink the burning sloop. It is just awful!"

And the good deacon, patient though he was shuddered, for the flames made everything distinct to the eyes of the hundreds who gazed out upon the scene.

All in confusion, cables slipped and anchors left behind, making sail without regard to signals or orders, the fleet was flying from the fearful danger that had swept down upon them without a moment of warning.

"Do you suppose any of our men were on the sloops when they bore down on the fleet and were set on fire?" asked one of the bystanders, addressing the deacon, who was using a spy-glass long in use in his family.

"Two boats left the sloops, full of men, and pulled inshore where it is dark the minute after they were all ablaze!" said the deacon. "I calc'late our boys are safe, long afore this. Jerusalem—see that ship burn! Her crew have lowered boats and some are jumping overboard. Oh, 'tis terrible. Tom Dart—Tom Dart, how could you do it?"

"They'd do worse by us, if they could!" said Abijah, who in spite of his wound had got out to see the sight. "This town would be in flames if they had whipped us when they had tried to get in!"

"Maybe so—maybe so!" said the deacon, sadly. "But it's an inhuman way of fightin'—it is, by gracious!"

The admiral's ship saved by sinking and liter-

ally crushing out the burning sloop which had almost reached her, with a terrific broadside from all her guns at scarce a pistol-shot of distance, was now under full sail standing off shore. Another ship was seen to round to windward of the one on fire and to be engaged in picking up the crew of the latter.

It was perilous work, for no one gazing at the fire leaping up masts and tarred rigging and sweeping fore and aft over the doomed hull, could imagine how quickly her magazine would scatter death and destruction all about her.

The sloop which had fired her, burned now to the water's edge, drifted away a mass of fire still, but this could not last long.

Just as the great ship in a blinding flash of fire and a cloud of flying planks and fiery spars went up high above the hissing waves, the sloop went down out of sight and then all was darkness on the distant sea.

The Terror ceased firing her great gun when her targets were lost to view and all was still outside but the dash of the distant surf on beetling rock and sandy beach.

In the town, the people all aroused, had gathered in wondering crowds and most of them waited for day to break when they might learn what the result of the daring plan had been.

When day dawned the Terror, with the two whale-boats in tow, was seen rounding the Point and standing in for her own anchorage close before the town.

Soon after Long Tom Dart was seen coming ashore in one of the boats, and as he leaped on the wharf the first to grasp his hand was the deacon.

"Ha! Ha! You've given the old Turk his answer in a hurry, Tom Dart!" he cried. "You've spoken with a tongue of flame, and I calc'late he'll not trouble the Salem folks again in a hurry. He's had terrible hard luck in our waters."

"He'll have some big shot-holes to plug up in his sides if Old Ebenezer was well aimed," said Dart. "'Twas a pity he couldn't wait for that answer. I wouldn't have asked more than an hour more to send him looking for the brig I sunk when I went out first time. Why, 'Bijah, be you out an' 'round?"

"Yes, daddy—I couldn't stay in and miss seein' the fireworks. It beat our last Fourth o' July all to death. I calc'late they're a leetle sick o' Salem and Salem's way o' teachin' lessons jist now."

That the work had been seen far and near and appreciated, too, was soon made manifest.

A courier came in hot haste from Boston to learn all the facts and the amount of damage the enemy had received. He was sent jointly by the military and naval authorities there, and the courier also announced that an American brig-of-war and a schooner had slipped safely out to sea in consequence of the opening left in the line of blockade.

"Consarn 'em—they'll gobble up some o' the game I want—they'll lay off a hundred mile at sea to pick up transports," cried Tom Dart, when he heard the news. "I'll be off on a cruise myself soon as night sets in."

"Why wait for night?" asked 'Bijah. "The British fleet is well down to the southward now, and your way is clear far as you can see."

"You're right, by smoke! I'll get in a leetle more powder and then skin out."

Some more powder and shot, a few fresh volunteers taken in place of his wounded men, and Tom Dart had the Terror ready for an outside cruise.

'Bijah wanted to go along, but with one arm helpless at his side, his room, as his father said, was worth more than his company.

This time in the broad light of noonday, cheered from many a lusty throat, the sloop set sail and stood boldly out from an unblocked harbor.

Heading off to the northeast under all the canvas she could show, the sloop sped swiftly out of sight, and when the sun went down not even a speck of her snowy sail could be seen by those who were left behind.

Captain Montrose had heard the firing in the night, and was feverishly anxious to know what had occurred—who were engaged—if it was a demonstration made by the fleet or not.

Volatile Mrs. Jennie Boggs brought the tea, toast and beef-broth allowed him for breakfast, and he, by a little faint flattery, succeeded in getting her tongue started.

"They sent out fire-ships," she said, "from here, and they went in among the British ships, like Samson's foxes into the Philistines' corn, and burned—I don't know how many. At any rate, there isn't a British ship in sight to-day."

"Farewell to all hopes of *my* release!" sighed the wounded officer. "Could I ask you to do me a very great favor?"

He placed a piece of gold in her hand to emphasize the request.

"La sakes! 'Twould be a pity if I couldn't! Anything in reason, captain, you know—anything in reason."

"I would like to have my bed changed to a room by myself, where I could look from a window—it is so dreary here."

"I don't see why it can't be. There's no one in the front up-stairs, and hasn't been since that poor dear Sergeant Trefoil went off so sudden."

I do believe some one murdered him. My old man was jealous enough to do it, but he is such a coward he daren't kill a chicken! I'll see. When the doctor comes around I'll ask him."

"Maybe Miss Doolittle will have some influence, if you speak to her on my behalf."

"La sakes! the doctor wouldn't listen to her half as soon as he would to me. He courted her once and she gave him the mitten. D'ye know what that means?"

"Not precisely."

"Well, she told him to scoot—she didn't want to go into harness with a pill-maker. He got hoppin' mad, and they don't speak when they meet. But I'll talk to him, and say you praise him up as the best doctor you ever knew, and he'll hear to the change."

Mrs. Boggs made a success of her undertaking.

When the Terror went to sea, Captain Montrose watched her as she tacked to and fro in the sinuous channel.

And after that he found, through the agency of a well-filled purse, numerous favors extended and delicacies served by the appreciative Mrs. Boggs, who began to think him almost as handsome as her lost sergeant.

He had quite as fine eyes, but such a mustache and whiskers few men could ever hope to exhibit as Trefoil had.

The captain was very desirous to have Miss Doolittle visit him, but she purposely avoided such visits, though she frequently paid kind attention to other wounded prisoners. He was afraid to send directly for her, though he covertly asked questions about her when talking with Mrs. Boggs.

He also learned in this way that Peter Connolly, the ex-marine, had gone to sea in the Terror, engaged to drill her crew in the use of small arms.

CHAPTER XIII.

A WONDROUS FEAT.

A FLEET of four square-rigged vessels, standing on a southwesterly course off-shore from Cape Elizabeth—had just made out the land, taken soundings and hauled off a couple of points to the southward.

One was a large transport—a full-rigged ship—two others were transport brigs and the fourth a rakish corvette—their convoy, or armed protector.

The latter carried twelve guns to a broadside—twenty-four in all—and was well-officered and manned, for she was to join the fleet on the Eastern coast, when she had seen her convoy safely in.

The transports carried cabin stores, ship's provisions and ammunition for the fleet under Admiral Dalrymple.

On board the ship a paymaster with a large amount of money to pay up the dues to officers and men in the fleet was a very important passenger. Besides—as a surprise, the admiral's wife and two pretty daughters had taken passage in the ship, to join the admiral on what in England was deemed little more than a pleasure cruise, for over there every one said the Yankees wouldn't fight and the war would be but a farce.

Hauling out a little from a lee shore the corvette Daphne signaled the transports to follow in close order down the coast and under a stiff load of canvas made fine way in the smooth water and leading breeze.

And while these vessels stood on, their commanders looking for a speedy close to a long and merry voyage, the two small men-of-war—the brig and schooner which had eluded the fleet off Boston and gone to sea, were beating up in the course they were heading.

Neither was very heavy, but they were well manned and carried as much weight of iron in their two batteries combined, as the Daphne could show.

But the transport ship was pierced for twenty guns and actually carried twelve, while each of the brigs had four of a side, eight in all and men enough for quite a respectable defense. At the time the Englishmen were sighted from the mast-heads of the American men-of-war, which by previous agreement cruised in company, the Terror was at anchor near the mouth of the Saco river where Captain Tom had made a harbor for the night.

Sergeant Connolly, as he was now called out of courtesy, was engaged in drilling the crew in the manual of small arms, an exercise many of them had little knowledge of and which at any time might be very useful.

The marine, like most of his nation, was hot-tempered and impatient, and he found his squad, as he called them, both awkward and careless, and he was using some rather bitter words when the sound of a cannon at sea sent lookouts aloft and broke up the drill in a hurry.

Two vessels, a brig and topsail schooner, flying the American flag, were seen almost side by side five or six miles off on the starboard bow, while almost dead ahead of them an English sloop-of-war shortened sail for action, while her convoy, in obedience to signaled orders, squared away and headed out seaward.

"By smoke, we'll take a hand in that leetle game!" cried Long Tom, as he took a long look

through his glass outside, while the men jumped to the windlass to raise anchor and led out the halliards ready for hoisting sail.

"The men-o'-war may fight it out and we'll go for them craft that are runnin' off. They wouldn't be in such a hurry to get out of the way, if they weren't worth a catchin'!"

"Them's my sentiments!" said Lieutenant Doolittle. "I calc'late they're chock-full o' nice things meant for the fleet off the coast, and my mouth waters to get at some of 'em."

The sloop shot swiftly out from shore in the smooth water with a leading breeze, but before she had gone a league from shore the English corvette and the two Americans, all under close fighting canvas, had got heavily to work, both sides fighting gallantly.

With his large sails drawing well, paying no attention to the combatants, Captain Dart headed out directly in the wake of the transports, which had shortened sail again after making an offing from the scene of combat.

"Our fellers are gettin' cut up bad, but Johnnie Bull is sufferin', too. I see his fore-yard is gone at the slings and his main-topmast is cut away!"

This was all Captain Dart said as he stood sharp across the wake of the English corvette, apparently attracting no attention from her, so hotly was she engaged with her two opponents.

Until now no flag had been hoisted on the Terror, but when she was within easy range of the three transports, she headed directly for the ship which lay to windward of the brigs and ran up her flag.

"Dad—she's got teeth, too! I count six guns a-stickin' out of her ports as she lays stern to!" said Elnathan, who had raised his spy-glass to his eyes. "And there are women aboard, sure as smoke—I see calico a-flutterin' on her upper decks. The brigs carry guns, too!"

"I s'pect so! Carronades—no good at more'n half a mile! Old Ebenezer will make 'em sick when he begins to talk a couple o'mile off! Get him ready, boys—double-shotted just to let 'em know what we can do. We'll send the first shot a few fathom to windward of the ship, and when they hear the music they may make up their minds to lower away their bunting!"

Full two miles from the war-vessels, all three of which still kept up a decreasing fire, Captain Tom took in his gaff-topsail and flying-jib, and hauling on a wind at an angle with the course the transports held, sent a shot from his great gun directly to windward of the ship.

Striking the sea a half-pistol shot away, the huge spheres of iron sent a cloud of spray into the air, evidently showing the Englishman that his new antagonist, though so small, was not to be lightly heeded.

Filling away, so her broadsides bore toward the sloop, the guns of the ship were fired rapidly one after the other to show she was ready for defense.

Every shot fell harmless into the sea a long way short of the sloop, and Captain Dart told his gunners to load and not to throw the next shot away.

"Shall I try for her spars, cap'n?" asked the head gunner, as he sighted his gun and told his mate to blow his match.

"'Twould be a pity to kill women. Fire the first shot high enough to skeer them down below," said Long Tom, thoughtfully.

The shot went shrieking through the air, and a huge rent in the ship's mainsail told the skill of the gunner who sent it.

Now both the ship and the brigs began to crowd sail and head directly off to sea, and Captain Dart speedily saw their fear. A glance astern told him that the British corvette, almost a wreck, had ceased firing; her colors were down.

The American brig, nearly disabled, with her mainmast gone close to the deck, but her colors yet aloft, lay close to the corvette, and the schooner, apparently damaged a good deal aloft, was closing up to both.

"By smoke! we've got the transports to tackle all alone, boys!" cried the old captain. "It's a big job, but if Ebenezer don't bu'st, we'll give 'em an all-fired hard pull for life and liberty. Load and fire fast as you can, and tumble down enough of their top hamper to spile their runnin' qualities."

A half-dozen shots cut away the maintop-mast of one brig, and took the mizzenmast of the ship off close down to the deck. The vessels in desperation now stood square before the wind, got out studding-sails and tried all seamanship could do to run out from under a fire they could not return effectually with their light guns.

Long Tom Dart laughed as he cried out:

"Up with the gaff-topsail again. Give her the square-sail too. We'll show 'em we've got speed as well as bottom!"

The transports soon found they could not shake off their persistent foe. It seemed maddening for a vessel that was scarce a tenth of the tonnage of the great ship to thus hold her at her mercy, and at last, apparently in unison and determined to get to close quarters, the ship and brigs hauled up in close order, braced their yards sharp, and waited to battle with the sloop at their own range.

Tom Dart was no fool. He knew where he held the advantage, and he too hove short to the wind, and ready if they chased to hold his distance, still kept his gunners steadily at their work.

Shot after shot, with unerring certainty, told the enemy that they had but one choice—to surrender, or be sunk. The sloop held distance as she pleased—easily managed, she had superior speed, and they could not bring her to close quarters.

It must have been terribly mortifying to the Englishmen, but they could see that their corvette had been almost dismantled and captured, and that one of her antagonists was repairing damages, so as to make sail and join the sloop in her attack on them.

Therefore, after exchanging signals, the English flag was lowered first on the ship and then by both brigs.

Giving three rousing cheers, with his crew drawn up under arms ready to punish any treachery that might be attempted, Captain Dart ran his sloop up to windward of the transports, and hailing them, received their surrender.

"My ship is leaking badly—you have sent several heavy shot into her at the water-line," shouted the English captain. "I have some terrified passengers, whom I would like to see landed, if possible."

"Luff your crafts and follow me into Portland Bay," shouted the grim old captain. "It is the nearest good port we can make. Act honest, and you will be treated well—show a sign of bad faith, and by smoke, I'll blow you out o' water."

"We will keep our faith—we have no other choice," was the answer. "Shape your course, and we'll follow if we can keep afloat. Our spars and sails are in poor working order."

"So I see—but we'll be in smooth water soon. Remember you have surrendered to the private armed sloop Terror, Long Tom Dart commander, and that man-o'-war that's sneaking up has nothing to do with the capture."

"All right, old man. You're all oak, I see."

"Oak, iron and brass," said Long Tom, laughing.

The transports were heading for Portland Bay in the wake of the sloop when the man-of-war schooner Enterprise crossed the bows of the Terror, and hailed:

"I see you've got the transports, sir—do you want any help to take care of them?"

This was from the captain of the schooner, who stood with his arm in a sling on his quarter-deck. Spars, sails and bulwarks told that his craft had received many hard knocks, and the number of men on his deck was small compared to the usual complement of men for a vessel of her size.

"I calc'late not, capt'ing. We haven't lost a man yet, and you seem to have got kind o' thinned down in your schooner. Guess you and the brig will have all you want to do to tow that dismantled sloop-o'-war in, if she don't go down on your hands. I'm bound in for Portland Bay, where you'll find me snug under cover of the guns in Fort Preble, if you're inside in the course of the next ten or twelve hours."

"All right. You're clear grit on the Terror, and no mistake! You've made the biggest haul of this war!"

"I calc'late we have, by smoke!" said the old captain, telling his helmsman to luff up and shiver the leech of his mainsail so as not to get too far in advance of the transports.

The latter made all the sail they could, for all were in a condition which made the reaching of a harbor a necessity, and as they rapidly closed in on the coast their speed in smoother water improved.

At sunset the Terror and the captured convoy rounded Cape Elizabeth and headed into Portland Bay. The two American men-of-war, with the crippled English corvette in tow, were almost hull down astern, but were heading for the same port.

After Captain Dart had seen the transports anchored within half musket-shot of a fort on shore—lying close together—he dropped his anchor just outside, and sending one boat on shore to report to the military authorities there he took another, and in company with Lieutenant Doolittle made his first visit to his prizes.

The ship—the Agnes, of eight hundred tons, twelve guns and thirty men, commanded by an old East India captain, was first boarded.

Her passenger-list included the Honorable Mrs. Dalrymple, wife of the admiral, and two very handsome daughters, nearly out of their teens—women in a proper sense. Also a chaplain for the fleet and a paymaster, who reluctantly acknowledged that a large amount of Admiralty money was on board.

"I calc'late, as your cap'n says his ship is fearful leaky, that I'll accommodate the passengers and that treasure aboard o' my craft," said Captain Dart. "The ladies shall have the after-cabin all to themselves and be treated as well as I know how. I shall only put an officer and a half-dozen men aboard the ship to keep her, for them guns ashore will play young Beelzebub if any sign of tryin' to get away is seen."

The ladies were not averse to the transfer,

for the clanking of the chain-pumps on the ship, kept going to free her from water, told them there was danger where they were.

Next the captain went to the two brigs and from them took three more passengers and the captain of each as a matter of security, for necessarily he could spare but few men for prize-keepers.

But he warned the Englishmen that he had sent word to the commander in the fort to open fire on the prizes if they showed any tokens of treachery. And this was really the case.

The old captain knew what he had on his hands and how hard it would be with his small force to hold so many prisoners, but he had made the captures and he was bound to hold them.

If he held them for the night, he intended to turn the vessels and cargoes over to prize commissioners next day and when his prisoners, or the main part of them, had been handed over to the military for safe-keeping or exchange, he would return to Salem with the treasure and the most important prisoners, realizing that he could guard them there most easily, besides, being in position to answer Admiral Dalrymple's pompous letters and threats to very serious effect since he had those in his custody whom the admiral would most likely wish surrendered to him at almost any sacrifice.

"Boys—our fortunes are well-nigh made, by smoke!" said the old captain, talking apart to his officers, after his return to the sloop and he had seen his new passengers safely quartered in the roomy cabin.

"As near as I can find out the cargoes of the ship and two brigs will count us at least three hundred thousand dollars. The old purser says them bags and boxes we've brought aboard, hold over sixty thousand sovereigns in gold and about five thousand in silver—that's nigh onto three hundred and twenty-five thousand dollars more!"

"How the folks in Salem will talk!" said Elnathan. "It'll send 'em all out a-privateerin', when they hear what luck we've had!"

"Don't call it luck, boy! 'Twas pluck did it. If we had waited for them other chaps the men-o'-war to help us, we'd have had to share with so many, our part wouldn't have seemed worth countin'!"

"That's true—but if they hadn't tackled the man-o'-war we couldn't have had much show!" said young Doolittle. "They got the hard knocks and poor pay, for I don't believe they've left much more than kindling-wood in the sloop-of-war!"

"We'll see in the morning—for they'll all be in by that time, if they ever get in! Set the watch, boys—be sure every light is kept in sight! I'm tired and need rest!"

He went below and prepared to find a berth in the forward cabin, for he had as he promised, yielded the large and roomy after-cabin to the ladies and the two maid-servants who accompanied them.

"'Tisn't very roomy, nor noways like a palace here, ma'am—but 'tis the best I can do for you and your darters till I get to Salem, and that'll be in a day or two. Then in my house or Deacon Doolittle's mansion you'll find comfort and as good cookin' as there is in all New England!"

This he said as he looked in to see if there was anything more he could do to make them comfortable.

"Salem—is not that very near Boston, captain?" asked Mrs. Dalrymple, a portly matron of five-and-forty years.

"Yes'm—"bout two hours' sail!"

"Ah—and my husband's fleet is off Boston, is it not?"

"It was when I left, ma'am. He has been off Salem also—but the weather was too warm for him there and he changed his anchorage!"

The lady did not understand his hidden meaning, and it was just as well she did not.

"When we get to Salem you will allow me to send word to my husband of our capture, will you not, my kind captain?"

"Sart'in, ma'am—sart'in I will, and I'll invite the old gent ashore to see you and his darters. He is all-fired proud, I've hearn tell, but we'll treat him as well as we know how, if he wants to come. Good-night, ma'am, an' pleasant dreams. You can sleep fearless as kittens, you're safe as if you were in London Tower—you are by smoke!"

The ladies smiled. The quaint ways of the old captain amused them, even in their unpleasant situation. They knew they were safe from insult, and had no doubt but that the admiral would speedily take some measures for their release when he heard where they were.

They were at anchor in a sheltered bay, and so near the fort on shore they could hear the hourly shout of each sentinel as he named his post and cried out "All's well!"

CHAPTER XIV. IN FOR IT.

WHEN day dawned again the two American men-of-war and their shattered prize lay at anchor near the Terror and her three prizes. Too brave and true to be curious, the naval officers could but wonder when they looked at the sloop

with her single gun and her prizes with so many men and guns.

The cool judgment of Long Tom Dart in keeping out of their range while he plied his heavy piece of ordnance with such dread effect was appreciated and praised. The British were not ridiculed or taunted for surrender to a force so far less than their own, for he could have sent them all to the bottom of the sea had they resisted longer. They could neither escape nor draw him within a range where they could get an advantage.

During the day Captain Dart was busy turning over his prizes and prisoners to those who would take care of them both and see ships and cargoes turned into prize-money for distribution at a proper time.

When night fell Tom Dart was ready for sea, and with the captains of his prizes and their passengers under guard in his cabins, he made sail, heading south for Salem. Knowing the coast thoroughly, he shaped a course which would carry him outside of islands, reefs and headlands and crowded all the sail he dared to carry with a fresh nor'wester blowing.

It was watch and watch, full-handed all night, for the water fairly hissed and boiled under the sharp bow of the sloop as she staggered along with bending mast, a single-reefed mainsail and bonnet off the jib.

With more men and stores on board, the sloop was down to deep lead line and the short ground swell more than once came surging in on decks scarce two feet above the level of the sea.

Nearly all night Old Tom kept the deck, for he knew every light and beacon on the coast, but at last, when the morning watch was called, he left Elnathan in charge and went below to get a little rest.

"Call me when you make Kittery Point out on your starboard beam!" was the order he gave when he went below.

He was called early—had it been clear enough to see it, the sun would have been scarce an hour high. Dimly, with the surf beating high on its black rocks, Kittery Point was seen and the narrow opening to Portsmouth harbor came in view.

"Dad, it's blowing great guns, with small arms thrown in! Hadn't we better make for Portsmouth harbor while we can? If we run by, we can't get back in this gale!"

Elnathan, before he called his father and asked this question, had taken a second reef in the huge mainsail.

The old captain took a quiet look to windward, before he answered, glanced at the compass and the lay of the land, and said in his quiet way:

"I calc'late we've got about the full heft of this blow now, and the old sloop stands it 'mazin' well. I guess we'll keep on. I'm hankerin' arter Beverly beans and goose and apple-sass, and we're on the right track to find 'em. You can go below, lad—I'll stand watch a while now!"

"Just as you say, dad. I'm not a-grievin'—the sooner we see Salem town, the gladder I'll be!"

And Elnathan took a squint at the Point they were leaving on the quarter and went below to get a bite and take a nap, he said.

The breakfast hour was at hand, and the crew in watches got the meal, and then all hands came on deck.

The English captains, first asking permission, were standing aft, watching the rush of the sharp hull through the rough waves with wonder, not unmixed with fear. Used to large vessels, in which storms could be faced with more safety, they could not imagine how a craft almost down to the water's edge, small in tonnage and straining with one great mast, could live in such a blow.

"Aren't you goin' to make a harbor before long?" asked the late captain of the Agnes.

"Yes—the way we scoot along we'll make Salem harbor by nightfall or a little after. The sloop is jest a-screamin', isn't she? She is makin' soapsuds enough to sarve a kingdom!"

"She'll run under. The foam combs up to the heel of her bowsprit every plunge she makes!" was the answer.

"If she does, good-by, John! But I don't think she will. I was runnin' from York once, bound to Bermudy, and we'd a tougher blow than this right astarn. Off o' Hatteras, crossin' the Gulf Stream, she took a dive and, by smoke! I thought then she never would come up. But she did, arter a while, an' it took us a mortal hour to get the seaweed clear of her deck and riggin'. We'd gone right under a field of it, and had a deck-load corded up while we were under water. It's a fact, by smoke!"

"Heavens! Do you ever take long voyages in a little thing like this?" asked the youngest captain. "I'd as soon think of going to sea in a wherry."

"Well, I've been to the Spanish Main, into every island in the West Indies, and away up into the Bay of Fundy more times than I've got fingers and toes. And the old creeter never played no tricks on me yet. She's as weatherly as she is fast. She is skimmin' along well on to fourteen knots to the hour this minute."

"I believe it!" said the Englishman, aghast.

"I tell you, man, if you keep on you'll run her under! You're not drunk, I'm sure!"

"No, by smoke! I never touch nothin' heavier than a mug o' cider. Don't be skeered; we Yankees never lay by for zephyrs!"

The Englishman sighed, looked at the other captains sadly and touched his head.

He evidently thought that old Captain Tom was crazy.

"Look!" he cried, as they shot by a headland and had a wide stretch of sea in front. "There is a square-rigged ship under maintopsail and storm staysail hove to, not a league outside of us. And here we drive under half canvas!"

"Yes, by smoke! but if I hadn't all I can attend to on my hands now, I'd run out and give that chap Hail Columby! Don't you see what she is—with her black hull and short stumps o' topmasts?"

"No, what is she?"

"A British sloop-of-war, by smoke! though she hasn't h'isted no colors yet. Isn't like to, neither, with a lee shore threatenin', for the wind is haulin' easterly every hour."

"It is a man-of-war. I can't see why she is hove to, when you are running free."

"I'm in a hurry, and she isn't!" said the old captain, dryly. "See! we're so little, they don't think we're worth noticing! If they only knew what and who I've got on board, they might shake out a reef and give us a hint to wait for her!"

"Why don't you show your colors?" asked the oldest captain.

"'Cause I'm not such a consarned fool as to coax for trouble when I don't want it. Not that I couldn't get away if she did fill away for us; but I hate most peskily to run from anything that floats, and for the women's sake below I'd have to run, or else risk their lives if we got into a tussle."

"We thank you for your consideration, captain," said Mrs. Dalrymple, who standing in the companionway of the cabin, had heard his remark. "I and my daughters have seen about all the fighting we desire already."

"I calc'late you have, ma'am. Consarn that cuss. He has h'isted his colors. I s'pose we'll have a show a rag, too. Mr. Doolittle, h'ist the flag I told you you might take home to 'Bijah and Sally Ann. And call the crew to quarters—we don't know how foolish that creetur' may act afore we're clean by him."

CHAPTER XV.

SHOWING A BRITISHER HOW TO SCOOT.

THE ship outside, headed off-shore and laid to the wind, had exhibited no signs of activity until, when the sloop was about abeam and to leeward, she ran up her colors.

Her officers must have noticed, through their glasses, an unusual number of people on the deck of the sloop, for a coaster or fisherman, a matter Captain Tom did not think of until it was too late to rectify the careless exposure.

Jonathan Doolittle now brought up an English ensign, which had been taken from one of the prizes, and bending it to the signal halyards ran it up.

"I hate most mightily to h'iste them colors," declared the old captain, blushing like a rebuked school-girl, "but ch'atin' is allowed in wartime, so I've hearn tell!"

"They've done you no good! They're shaking out their foresail and getting ready to run down!" cried the young lieutenant.

"So they be! Jouathan, jump to the tiller there and keep the sloop's nose off till it points for that high lump o' land on our lee bow, then we'll show the Britisher how to scoot. To the halyards two or three dozen of you; we'll shake out a reef in the mainsail!"

"Great snakes! Why, you aren't goin' to put more sail on her?" cried the ex-captain of the Agnes, in alarm.

"Guess we be! Don't calc'late to stand still and let that square-rigged tub creep up in scratchin' distance! Elnathan, pull down that checkered rag and run up the stars and stripes! If the durned creetur' out there follers my wake, he'll scrape bottom afore he is an hour older!"

By the time the sloop-of-war had her foresail set, heading in for the sloop, Captain Dart had the reef out of his mainsail and the sloop tore along with her bows literally buried in foam.

She was heading right in for the rock-bound coast, while the English ship, adding a foretop-sail to the sail already set, fired a shot as a summons for the sloop to heave to.

The vessels were now not far from two miles apart, the sloop-of-war at first seeming to gain on the Terror.

But as soon as the mainsail of the latter was fairly up and drawing well again, the gain was on her side and while she neared the shore, which Tom Dart knew so well, the other craft hauled out several points, evidently fearful of the shoals and rocks so abundant along that part of the coast.

"Guess you may as well hold fast with them gun-tackles! There isn't goin' to be any shootin' match on this hitch!" observed Long Tom to his gunners, who had been getting Old Ebenezer ready for work.

The sloop-of-war had found her foretopsail too

much for the gale, and taking it in, she hauled up so as to head off rather than on the coast.

But she seemed determined to keep the sloop in sight, for she headed down the coast, pitching and plunging into the chop sea and yawning about as awkwardly as a fat man on skates.

The English passengers began to watch her with interest—perhaps with some hope of rescue in their minds. If they had known Long Tom Dart as well as his men did, such a hope would have been short-lived. He would far sooner pile his vessel a wreck on the black rocks in sight than yield up to a hated foe.

Rushing through the water at a tremendous rate, her great mast bending under the press of sail till it seemed as if the shrouds would part or the spar itself give way, the sloop sped down the coast in sight of breakers all the time, and often inside of them in channels well known to the veteran who gave the course.

Too much frightened to go below, the Englishmen and the ladies, too, remained aft on the sloop, clinging to the rail around the cabin hatchway, expecting disaster all the time, though the crew and captain seemed as calm and easy in their minds as men upon a pleasure trip with no peril hovering near.

Mile upon mile, slowly but surely the nimble sloop took the lead on the larger ship, and before night with its friendly cloak had darkened the waters the sloop-of-war gave up the hopeless chase and hauled out from the dangerous coast.

"Reef down again, boys!" cried the old captain with a grim smile, when he saw the ship changing her course. "We'll make Salem harbor as soon as we want to under less canvas and run no risk. 'Twould be kind o' ticklish runnin' in on them batteries and they not knowin' we were comin'—we might get peppered by our own friends, you see!"

Under reduced sail, and far more comfortable for all on board, the stanch sloop now held her course, the captain still on deck, trusting no one else with the pilotage in waters so full of danger.

Light after light well known to him was passed—often he changed his course to clear some far-extending point, again he ran inside of islands where the water was smooth as it would be on an inland lake—all the time cool and confident in his knowledge of the coast.

Just before dawn, after keeping the deck all night, Long Tom had the helm put alee and the jib-sheet drawn over to windward, while the mainsail was hauled flat aft.

"We'll see the steeples o' Beverly and Salem when day opens!" he declared.

He was right. At sunrise, with the wind down so he could carry all sail, Captain Dart headed his craft for the main channel bearing up to Salem harbor.

With the stars and stripes above, three English flags floated from his main truck.

CHAPTER XVI.

BRITISH GOLD.

GOLD is very powerful. Captain Montrose knew just how to make it useful. By a judicious use of a few sovereigns he had not only succeeded in getting a chamber to himself, with a window opening toward the harbor, but had purchased through the kind offices of Mrs. Boggs, a fairly good second-hand spy-glass, which he used very frequently as he grew stronger.

Mrs. Boggs procured wine and delicate food for him—his gold and a little well-received flattery had won her completely into his service. She had managed to get her "old man" detailed as a guard at the jail, so he was not in her way any more.

"La sakes! What on earth is comin' now?" exclaimed Mrs. Boggs, who was carrying in some broiled chicken, tea and toast to the captain on the morning when Long Tom Dart fired a salute of thirteen guns, one for every State, as the Terror headed in for her old anchorage in Salem harbor.

"It is that infernal sloop with her monster gun, back again!" cried the captain, gazing out seaward through his glass. "She must have taken a prize or sunk another ship—she flies the English flag under her own!"

"La sakes! She is well named the Terror. Long Tom Dart is worse than a pirate, so he is—a-thinkin' of nothin' but killin', killin' all the time!" said Mrs. Boggs with well-affected indignation.

"I wish, my dear madam, when you have time by and by, you would find out what he is making such a fuss about!"

"Sartingly, captain! Anything I can do to oblige you, is easy to me! What's up now?"

An exclamation of wonder breaking from his lips caused her inquiry.

"There are women on her deck—three or four at least—and some officers in uniform it seems to me? What can it mean?"

"More prisoners, I'll bet a cookie!" said Mrs. Boggs. "But you don't have women on men-o'-war, do you, captain?"

"Not as a general thing, my fair friend. But in some cases captains and admirals are allowed to take their families to sea with them!"

"La sakes! You don't say! How I'd like to be a captain's wife and go to sea. I just hanker

arter a life on the ocean—I do. If my old man had only been a sailor, I might have been a happier woman! But—captain, don't let that chicken get cold afore you taste it. I briled it myself and dressed it with the butter of my own churning, and parsley from my own garden!"

"Thank you—you are a model housekeeper, Mrs. Boggs!"

"La sakes! how you navy ossifers do flatter a body!" giggled the pleased landlady. "Now eat hearty and by the time you are through I'll know what old Tom Dart and hiscrew have been doing!"

"Thanks—ten thousand thanks—I will devour every morsel while you are gone!"

"See you do!" she answered as she left the chamber.

The captain did turn to the tempting breakfast as soon as she retired. He had plans in his mind which required strength for execution. For he did not intend to remain a prisoner longer than he could help, while his frigate, afloat not five leagues away, lacked her commander.

When only the bones of the chicken remained on his plate and most of the buttered toast and a couple of eggs had disappeared, the captain was ready to receive a report from Mrs. Boggs, for he had seen her returning from a hurried trip to the Doolittle mansion a short way down the main street.

"You can never dream what that poison old sarpint Tom Dart has been a-doin' of!" exclaimed the landlady, almost out of breath, either with the haste or importance of her news.

"I never dream, except of you, my fair hostess!" he answered, with a most winning smile. "So you'll have to tell me the news!"

"Well—I will, but I'm half afeard you'll not believe it. Old Tom Dart and his crew have taken three British ships, with more than three times as many men in 'em as he had, and lots o' cannon, and a paymaster with ever so much gold and silver, and an admiral's wife and two darters and their maids, and—and I don't know what else!"

The woman had to stop for want of breath, but she went on as soon as she got fresh wind.

"They say the prizes, transports they call 'em, with their cargoes, are worth more'n a million dollars, and old Tom and his men get it all. La sakes—they'll be prouder than so many Tom Turkeys in spring time!"

"An admiral's wife and daughter—did you hear their names?" asked the captain.

"Yes—I forget it now—him that has the fleet out there at sea!"

"*Dalrymple?*"

"Yes—that's it, and them women-folks are all a-comin' up to Deacon Doolittle's to stay till the council decides what to do with 'em."

"Strange! Fortune seems to set but one way! All the good luck flows toward this old heathen—Tom Dart!"

"Jest so! It's too bad, and he is as ugly as an old hutchin'-post, and they say his wife can outscold a poll parrot, and hasn't a sound tooth in her head nor a wisp o' hair that's her own."

"Did you see Miss Sally Doolittle while you were out?" asked the captain.

"La sakes, yes. And she is primped up so you'd hardly know her—all ready to receive company! If I was her, I wouldn't use powder and paint to make folks think I'd got a nice complexion. But them things do hide freckles, they say. Shall I get you some wine, captain, or mix you a leetle sling?"

"A glass of wine, if you please, my dear madam, and then paper, pen and ink. I am acquainted with Mrs. Dalrymple and her daughters, and, if permitted, will let them know that I am a captive also."

"Jest so. Be them girls pretty?"

"Passable—not near so handsome as a lady of whom I dream every night of my life."

"La sakes! There you be a-flatterin' me again, and me a married woman. I don't know what this world is a-comin' to."

And blushing, giggling as she went, she hurried to get his wine and writing materials.

"If I only was a little stronger she would aid me to escape, and I would once more stand on my own deck," sighed the captain. "I am weak—very weak yet. They know it here, and thus leave me without a special guard."

CHAPTER XVII.

THE ADMIRAL'S WIFE AND DAUGHTERS FIND A FRIEND.

DRESSED in excellent taste, richly, in accordance with the means and position of her father, but neatly withal, Sally Doolittle received Mrs. Dalrymple and her daughters with polite grace when her brother escorted them from the sloop to the mansion after they landed.

Her mother, quite abashed at the idea of meeting such "grand company," kept in the background.

When dinner was served she had the womanly delicacy to have their table set in a private room, with their own servants in waiting, and at their request joined in the meal to make them feel more at ease.

In short, though only a "Yankee girl," Miss

Doolittle was at once lady-like, intelligent and pretty—some would call her beautiful.

When the captive ladies learned that their fair hostess had been off to the fleet, and had met Admiral Dalrymple face to face, they had many questions to ask.

And in justice to herself she had to tell what errand took her there. In justice also to the admiral she spoke of the kind manner in which he received and dismissed her, and also expressed a hope that he, as a husband and father, would soon have them in his ship.

"This is a cruel, cruel war, but we women should not suffer for it or in it," she said.

"Were all Americans as kind as you and as brave as those who captured us, I do not think the war would last long."

A timid knock at the door announced Deacon Doolittle. He held a letter in his hand. He blushed and stammered a little when he addressed Mrs. Dalrymple.

"Here's a letter, ma'am, that I've been asked to give you. It's open, but I haven't read it, though 'tis from a prisoner."

"From whom is it, pray?" asked the lady, bowing.

"Captain Montrose. He tried to get in and captivate us, but he got the worst of it."

"Captain Montrose, of the frigate Galatea?"

"Yes, ma'am. That's him, and here's his letter."

The deacon laid it on the table, and bowing awkwardly, left the room.

Mrs. Dalrymple took it up, glanced over it and then read it aloud:

"Captain Montrose of the Royal Navy, presents his sincere sympathies and condolences to the Hon. Mrs. Dalrymple and her daughters, and regrets that his wounds have left him so weak and helpless that he could not, in person, if permitted, be able to pay his respects."

"Hoping they may soon be permitted to join the gallant admiral. Captain M. has the honor to be their very obedient servant, etc., etc."

"Cannot we go and see him?" asked Miss Alice the eldest daughter, hastily.

Sally fancied that a faint blush gathered on her fair face when she spoke.

"Perhaps so—I will inquire at a proper time," replied her mother.

Then turning to Miss Doolittle, she asked:

"Is the captain dangerously wounded?"

"Severely, but not dangerously!" was the reply.

"You have seen him?"

"Yes, madam; I have seen most of our wounded prisoners and did the little I could to alleviate their sufferings!"

"He was a frequent visitor of ours, before the fleet sailed from England!" said Mrs. Dalrymple. "The admiral liked him very much."

"So did one of his daughters," thought Sally, for Alice, who had reached for the letter and was reading it, had turned very pale, while she remarked:

"He must be dreadfully hurt—his handwriting, usually bold and handsome, is so faint and tremulous!"

"Perhaps he wrote while excited and hurried, and not with such composure as if free from restraint!" said Mrs. Dalrymple. "I am very sorry for him—he is a gallant man!"

"Gallantry has two definitions!" said Miss Doolittle in studied carelessness, if the expression is not inapt. "One, bravery in battle—the other devotion to the fair sex!"

"True, and I fear the captain is gallant in both senses!" said Mrs. Dalrymple, not observing that the face of Alice was almost scarlet, although so pale a moment sooner.

"Mamma, cannot we get permission to send off letters to our father?" asked Alice, apparently anxious to change the subject of conversation.

"I hope so, dear. I will ask, after dinner is over, if Miss Doolittle will kindly tell us to whom we must apply for leave!"

"My father is president of the Town Council!" said Sally. "I have no doubt he and Captain Dart will accede to your wishes. I will ask him to favor you as far as he can!"

"Thanks, dear young lady. We shall never forget your kindness," said the lady, with deep feeling. "When we left home, we thought we would surprise the admiral and have little more than a pleasant yachting voyage. His will be a sad surprise and our voyage, at no time very pleasant, ends most sadly!"

During all this time dinner had not been neglected, and the fair girl, who acted as hostess, was pleased to see that trouble had not destroyed the appetites of the ladies.

After dinner Sally Doolittle, at the request of Mrs. Dalrymple, got permission for the ladies to visit the wounded captain, and acted as their guide on the occasion.

The captain was taken by surprise, for pretty Mrs. Boggs was waiting on him at dinner, and her face was very red when she opened the door to see who knocked. He had doubtless been paying her some pretty compliment as usual.

"Mrs. Dalrymple and her daughters—old and intimate friends, I understand, Captain Montrose!" said Sally, advancing with easy grace and utterly ignoring the presence of Mrs. Boggs, whom she did not like, for reasons best known to herself,

"Cheers, ladies—take cheers!" cried that person, bustling about and dusting off each chair she offered, with her apron.

Montrose first turned deathly pale, then a deep blush reddened his handsome face.

"It is kind—an unexpected honor!" he stammered. "I hope *all* the ladies are well! Pardon an invalid for not rising. Mrs. Boggs, will you be so good as to take these dinner dishes away?"

"Sart'in—if you want me to—but, Lor' sakes, you aren't through yet, be you?"

"Yes—thank you—I had finished before the ladies came in."

"Well, the pie and puddin' will *keep*!"

So the *débris* of the meal was carried off and the invalid turned an anxious look upon his friends.

"I will leave you alone with the captain," said Sally, who had not been offered a seat by Mrs. Boggs, or taken one.

"No, no; my dear young lady, remain. We have no secrets to impart, nothing to say which the whole world could not hear. We are only anxious to tender our sympathies to the captain and to bid him be of good cheer. Stars cast light through the darkest clouds sometimes, and we hope yet to see the captain at his post of duty well and hearty!"

"Thanks to one and all, fair ladies! Your visit is immensely cheering. Mine is a lonesome fate—wounded and a captive in the power of one's enemies."

"It might be worse. A prisoner of war surely receives kind treatment," said Mrs. Dalrymple.

"Yes—ah, yes. I ought not to complain. But I have the *blues* woefully a good deal of the time," said the captain, still affecting an air of melancholy.

"What a tongue that Boggs woman has!" said Miss Doolittle, with a satirical twinkle in her bright eyes. "She told my mother this morning that the captain was the jolliest, best-natured and most liberal lodger in her house. She couldn't bear to think he would ever have to leave it."

"Mrs. Boggs like *others* of her sex may tend to exaggeration when she talks," stammered the captain. "I try, of course, to be as cheerful as I can in the presence of others. It is when we are alone that memory sings her saddest songs."

"And paints her brightest pictures!" suggested Sally, catching an interchange of glances between the captain and Alice Dalrymple.

Both the latter blushed, and Alice saying she did not feel very well, suggested to her mother that the visit should be brief.

Sally smiled and hoped there was no tendency to "heart-disease" on the part of the lady—though sudden flushes indicated that peculiar ailment.

No reply was made, for the ladies rose and took their leave of the invalid, promising another call when permitted.

"I wish that pesky Sally Doolittle would stay to hum!" cried Mrs. Boggs, rushing into the captain's room as soon as his "company" had left.

"So do I," honestly added the captain.

CHAPTER XVIII.

DART'S DARING PLANS.

THERE was a stormy meeting in a secret session of the Town Council held the night after Captain Dart got in with his new prisoners.

The captain, though not a member elect, was, by unanimous vote, invited to take a part in their deliberations, and, as it was seen on a previous occasion, he held a powerful influence there.

The question now was the disposition of the horde of prisoners they had on hand, and especially of the three ladies and their servants.

"It takes twenty to thirty able-bodied men to guard the jail and hospital!" said the deacon. "And they have to be paid and fed. And the pison prisoners are eatin' more'n their 'tarinal hides are worth! If 'twasn't for bein' on-human, I'd go for starvin' 'em same as they say they do with the prisoners they put into Dartmoor. If we can exchange 'em for impressed Americans aboard their ships, let's do it. We'd have men of some use to us then!"

"I'd never let 'em go, the mean cusses, to come and fight them as never harmed them. They're nothin' but slaves to the king, anyway!" cried another councilman.

"The women—they're what I'm a-thinkin' about!" said the president of the council, gravely.

"Deacon! Deacon! I'm ashamed of you—a man of your age and respectability, with as good a wife as there is in Salem, acknowledgin' in open council, that he is thinkin' of other women!"

Long Tom Dart said this so gravely that the whole council burst out in a roar of laughter.

"You knew what I meant, you consarned old porpoise! You brought the women here and you ought to be made to take care of 'em, 'stead of sending 'em 'round to me to house and wait on!"

"If they're thrown on my hands, I'll put 'em

aboard my sloop and run out alongside the old admiral and say 'Here's your women, you old hog. We Yankees don't make war on women or hold 'em as prisoners—no, by smoke!'

"Tom Dart, you'd no more dare run your sloop alongside a British three-decker than you'd put your hand in a shark's open mouth if you'd got overboard! Why, she'd sink you afore you had counted *ten!*"

"Deacon Jasper Doolittle, after what I've done *tisn't* for *you* to say what I don't dare to do. With my sloop and such men as I've got I dare do that and more too! Jest let this council say the women are mine to deal with as I deem *just* and I'll show you what Long Tom Dart is made of. And I'll make such terms with that admiral that you'll shed tears for envy. I know something of human natur'—I do. I haven't sailed the salt sea, man and boy, for over fifty years for nothin', been to furrin' parts and all that. I'll risk the sloop and my life, and all that's in her, if you'll risk puttin' the women in my care!"

"I move we do it," said Simon Blossom, the youngest member of the council, but an *old* bachelor for all that. "I hate women. Speci-ally sich as will larn our gals highfalutin' notions."

The motion was seconded, put to vote, and carried unanimously.

"That settles the matter so far as the women is concerned—I'll take 'em off your hands whenever they and you are ready in the morning, deacon. Keep 'em to-night where they are. And if the council will agree to exchange man for man, British for American, I'll bet I get every Yankee back that's in that fleet forced to service under their flag."

"Try it—if you *do* get back and the admiral agrees—we will," said the deacon.

So—after all the noise and discussion, the council separated amicably, and the deacon with Captain Tom in company returned to his mansion in the best humor possible.

"Sally, can the cap'n and me see them ladies for a leetle while?" asked the deacon of his daughter when he entered the sitting-room. "We've got some news that will tickle 'em awfully, I guess."

"I'll see—I don't think they've gone to bed yet," was the cheerful answer.

She went to their room and soon returned with a decidedly *affirmative* answer.

It came in the shape of the ladies themselves.

"Your daughter stated that you and Captain Dart desired to see us," said Mrs. Dalrymple, addressing the deacon.

"Yes'm! Hem! I'm not exactly prepared—that is to say ma'am and misses—we of the Town Council—Consarn it, cap'n, I'm stuck. You jest tell 'em what we've decided on."

"Well, ma'am—it is jest this, beginnin' at the stem and endin' at the stern, the long and short of the whole story. Seein' as 'twas through me you got took and held as prisoners, I thought 'twould be only human if through *me* you were set free again. And I offered, if 'twas left to me to carry you out safe and sound to the admiral to-morrow, and to say to him: 'Here they be, wife, darters and all that belongs to 'em, jest as good as I found 'em, and they're *yours*, free as air and water.' And they agreed to it. *That's all.*"

"Oh, you darling old captain!" cried Emma, the youngest girl, and she sprung at Dart as if she would eat him up bodily, and kissed him again and again.

"Bless your noble heart," cried Alice, and she kissed him, too.

"Captain! CAPTAIN! A man of your age, with the best wife in all Salem, a-standin' still and lettin' kisses fall on your lips like honey into a sponge."

And the deacon just danced with glee as he saw Tom Dart turn all sorts of colors and try to draw back before the old lady took her turn.

"Sho, deacon—you're only sorry *tisn't you!* There, gals—that'll do. I wasn't a-fishin' for thanks. All I wanted was for you to know it to-night, so you'd sleep well and be all ready to go off with me to-morrow—lag and baggage. If nothin' happens we can't foresee now, I'll see the admiral a-huggin' and kissin' them he has a right to love afore noon to-morrow. And now good-night!"

"Good-night, and Heaven bless you! You are as good as you are brave!" said Mrs. Dalrymple pressing his hard hand.

The eyes of the deacon twinkled yet, as he went out and when he and the captain reached the front door, he dryly asked:

"What was that you said in council, Tom, about thinkin' of other women?"

"I've forgot, deacon—I've forgot!" answered Long Tom laughing.

"Which flowers do you like best, roses, hollyhocks, or *two-lips?*" cried the deacon, as Tom hurried off in the darkness on his way home.

"Elder blows, you old gander!" thundered Tom as he turned the corner.

"I calc'late we're even now—though the old sea-dog told the truth when he said I'd like to be in his place. Well, men will be men and women will be sweet just as long as the world lasts!"

And the deacon went in to read his chapter and go to bed.

CHAPTER XIX.

NOW, BLAST YOU, SHOOT!

A MORE lovely day never dawned over sea and land than that which followed the night described in our last chapter. A nice breeze—just fresh enough to make the waves dance to its music, swept off-shore. Overhead, a few fleecy clouds drifted beneath the azure arch of heaven, like winged spirits drifting over homes once loved, now lost forever.

Long Tom Dart came off on board the sloop at an early hour and had all hands called on deck.

"Boys," said he, "are you all willing to follow where *I* lead?"

"Ay—if into the jaws of death itself!" answered Jonathan Doolittle, and he spoke for all.

Every man bowed his head and shouted "Ay!"

"Thankee, lads! I didn't expect any other answer, for I know *you* and you know *me*! This day I'm goin' to face a big danger, but I carry that with us, that'll carry us clear and make us more of a wonder than we be now! All I say is, obey orders, ask no questions, and I'll carry you through with colors flyin' and not a drop o' blood lost! That's all. Be ready to h'iste anchor and sail in an hour from now. And in the mean time load and double-shot old Ebenezer, and see every gun and pistol aboard loaded and ready for use. Pikes and cutlasses too. We may not want 'em—but 'twill do no harm to have 'em fit for use!"

The captain now jumped into the largest boat, was rowed to the wharf and told the boat's crew to wait his return.

Hastening up to the mansion of Deacon Doolittle, he found Mrs. Dalrymple and her daughters dressed in the best they had to wear, waiting his arrival.

Their faces were bright with joy, though they said they had been too happy to sleep much.

"Can I go with Miss Sally to say a few parting words to our wounded friend, Captain Montrose?" asked Alice, addressing Captain Dart.

"Sart'in, miss, but cut the yarn short. I want to be off while wind and tide favors."

"We will hasten," said the blushing girl.

"I hope you will not think ill of me for wanting to see *him* again," said Alice Dalrymple to Sally as they hurried toward the Boggs residence. "The *truth* is, we were engaged to be married when he was suddenly called into command of the Galatea. We have been acknowledged lovers these three years and he was so devoted it almost killed him to be called away from me. *My* entreaties induced mamma to undertake this disastrous voyage."

Sally could but think of his recent vows of love for herself, but, noble as she was pure, the brave girl kept the secret and did not expose the treachery of the recreant captain.

They soon were in the presence of the captain, with whom Sally discreetly managed to leave Alice alone a few minutes by expressing a wish to see the condition of some other invalids in the building.

And Montrose had "coals of fire heaped on his head" in a figurative sense, when Alice poured out praises upon the beautiful girl whom she had just told of her love and her engagement to him.

"Tell the admiral to get me away from here at any cost! I cannot endure life here!" was his last injunction when Montrose parted with Alice.

Most fortunately for him, Mrs. Boggs was off after marketing when he received this visit, or she, in the jealousy of her nature, might have learned more than he wanted her to, just then.

"You are the dearest, best little woman in the wide, *wide* world!" said Alice, when she rejoined Sally and started to her mother and sister at the mansion. "I had a sad, but oh, such a tender interview with my dear Arthur and all through your kindness. I will never, *never* forget you! Oh, if his release can be secured how happy I will be!"

Sally thought of the time that same "dear Arthur" had been on his knees vowing eternal love for *her*—of a mustache and pair of false whiskers now hidden in a bureau in her room, once worn over his treacherous face, but still she bravely kept her own counsel and did not throw a cloud over the sunshine of love in the pathway of the admiral's daughter.

As soon as Alice rejoined her mother and sister, Captain Dart led the way to his boat, for the wharf was near.

The servants and baggage had already been sent on board the Terror.

On the wharf the deacon and his daughter parted with their guests—tears and blessings marking the scene on the part of the happy English ladies.

The moment the last reached the deck of the sloop, her anchor, already apeak, was run up, and under full canvas the vessel sped swiftly out to sea.

As they drew out upon the flashing water, and the dark hulls of the anchored British fleet rose to view, Captain Dart told the ladies they must go into the cabin and remain there until he had them called up.

"For," said he, "we *may* get fired on, and you'll be safe below the water-line."

"The admiral will never fire a shot while the white flag of truce flies from your mast," said Mrs. Dalrymple.

"I hope not, ma'am—I hope not for the sake of you and your darters—but it's best to be ready for accidents—so do jest as I tell you; stay below till I send for you."

So they went below, and the sloop stood swiftly on toward the fleet, the stars and stripes flying proudly from her gaff and a white flag fluttering from the main truck.

As they drew near the fleet from every ship came the rattle of kettle-drums and the shrill notes of the fife. The British were beating to quarters, officers and men were seen rushing to their stations—all were astir.

"I do wonder if the p'ison sarpints think I'm such a fool as to come out alone to fight their whole fleet!" cried the old captain, as he saw the men-of-war preparing for battle.

At the tiller himself, all *his* men at quarters, too, ready to die fighting, if such a fate was forced upon them, the sloop stood on through the fleet, heading for the lofty three-decker that carried the admiral's flag.

Nearer and nearer, until within pistol-shot of the great ship, and then luffing close to windward, jib sheet over and main sheet aft, the captain brought his sloop to wind, and she lay still almost as a "painted ship on a painted sea."

Then—with three tiers of huge, black-mouthed guns bearing right down from her decks, depressed for close quarters, the crew of near one thousand men at their stations, matches all alight—the admiral in full uniform sprung up on the poop deck of his ship, and shouted with stentorian voice:

"I've got you where I want you now, you infernal Yankee—down with your colors and surrender at once, or I'll send you down to *hell* without time to breathe a prayer for mercy!"

"Couldn't strike them colors, *nohow*, admiral! Keep cool—I've come out to talk to you, to answer that letter you sent in to us Salem folks!"

Long Tom was as cool as an iceberg, as unruffled as a good pastor's face at a donation party.

"Silence, you old scoundrel! I give you just three minutes to lower your flag—if 'tis not down *then*—I fire!" shouted the admiral, wildly angry.

"Guess you'd be sorrier than *us* when 'twas over!" said Dart, coolly. Then turning to his lieutenant, standing near, he said:

"Jonathan, fetch up the women!"

A minute later he told his son to take the tiller, and stepped to the cabin hatchway.

"You've but a minute more!" shrieked the admiral.

"That's time enough! Now, blast you, send your own flesh and blood down where you said you'd send *us*!"

What a picture! With Alice and Emma Dalrymple each clasping one of his hands, Mrs. Dalrymple, white-faced and terror-stricken by his side, the old hero stood with bared head on his deck, looking the admiral full in the face.

CHAPTER XX.

A SUDDEN CHANGE—GRATITUDE NOT A NAME ALONE.

A SECOND—silent, staring as if he looked in the face of death, then the admiral shouted:

"Stand back from every gun! Put out your matches—lower and man my barge! Hurry—hurry!"

The crew of the barge rushed to the quarter davits where it was slung—some went into the boat ere it was lowered away, the rest went down by the tackles when the boat touched the water.

As they reached the side of the ship, the admiral was at the foot of the gangway ladder, bareheaded. His cocked hat fell off as he went over the side. He neither looked nor asked for it. Into the boat before the men had oars in hand, he gasped out hoarsely:

"Push off! Put me aboard that sloop, quick!"

The men in wonder obeyed. They had not three boats' lengths to go; scarce a minute passed before the admiral leaped on the low deck of the Terror and sprung, with a wild cry, whether of joy or fear, who could tell?—into the outstretched arms of his wife, who clasped him to her bosom, while both his daughters clung sobbing to his neck.

Silent, with arms folded on his broad chest, his tall form erect, his face unblanched with a thought of peril, Long Tom Dart stood there. The admiral—iron but a few minutes before—now melted into sobbing like a child, hysterically gasped out:

"Wife—children—how came you here?"

"Captured in the ship Agnes, off the coast, this noble man has treated us with tender kindness and brought us here to *you*, free and without any impulse but the goodness of his brave, true heart! Your frowning guns ready to pour

* NOTE.—I beg the pardon of scrupulous readers—the word *sh. ol* had not then come into use.

down death and destruction show his fearful risk!"

Turning—the admiral shouted to his fleet captain, who stood transfixed with wonder on the deck the admiral had left.

"Beat the retreat, sir! Run in the guns again and send up the signal—'All is right!'"

Then he turned to old Tom Dart. He tried to speak. His lips quivered—his whole frame shook from head to foot. He reached out his hand and wept, as men, seldom weep!

"I have faced death in every shape—on land and sea, by fire and wind and flood and in the storm of battle! Till now—I never met my conqueror! Old man—hero—I know not what to say! I could have crushed you without a shudder a little while ago—now—now I would die to serve you! How can I reward you? I am not poor—yet I dare not offer gold to such a man!"

"Seein' as I've got about as much as I want, admiral—you're right, by smoke! Take your wife and darters to your ship—they're worth a brave man's love! Take 'em—and if any o' our women fall into your hands, treat 'em kind. That's all!"

"Do not refuse the hand I offer! I would be your friend, for all time!" cried the admiral, for Long Tom had not touched his extended hand.

"I'm willin' to shake while the white flag flies—but we can't either of us forget we serve under hostile flags. Take your women folks aboard, and then—if you feel like listenin' to some offers the Town Council o' Salem sends by me—all right."

Tom Dart then grasped the hand that the admiral extended.

"Come with us to my ship. You are safe with me, as these loved ones have been with you. Anything, everything you ask, that I can yield without sacrificing honor, shall be yours! Come, captain—come! Let go your anchor—let your crew feel at ease. I'd scuttle my ship before I'd fire a shot to hurt you or them now!"

"All right, admiral. I'll go, and I'll take my first luff here, Jonathan Doolittle, along in case we want any writin' done. He is a main good hand with the pen, and no slouch with the sword."

The admiral led the way to the barge, which, alongside the sloop, was as high as its deck out of water. Into it he landed the ladies, and Tom Dart and his first officer followed, leaving orders for the baggage and servants to follow.

A change, such as skill and discipline made almost magical, had occurred upon the great three-decked ship.

Every one of her black-mouthed cannon had been drawn back in place and secured—the men at quarters all withdrawn, their weapons laid aside—no sign of readiness for deadly action left in sight.

A ladder draped with flags, lined with side-boys holding man-ropes covered with linen white as snow was lowered over the lofty side, and up this, the old admiral first, with his wife's hand in his, then Captain Tom with Alice, and close following, his lieutenant escorting Emma, ascended to his upper deck.

The roll of drums, the clatter of the guard presenting arms, the usual salute to rank, and the admiral was again upon his deck—a monarch of the sea upon his throne.

Into his elegant cabin, where refreshments were quickly ordered, the admiral took his family and his visitors, and after listening to a brief recital of the wondrous captures made by Tom Dart and his famous sloop, waited to hear what the captain had to propose from the Town Council of Salem.

The exchange of every impressed American in the fleet for a British prisoner held on shore was the first proposition—placed in writing and consented to.

The admiral was to have the crew of every ship mustered at once and take the names of the men.

He also pledged his honor to make no more attacks on Salem and to let her fishing-boats come out upon the banks free from molestation and harm.

Long Tom could not, or would not ask for more.

Alice, in a whispered conference with her father, pleaded for special terms in favor of Montrose, for commissioned officers had not been spoken of. The terms read man for man. And officers—sometimes poor specimens of manhood—are always held as of far greater importance than those who hold no rank.

Long Tom Dart shook his head when it was proposed to let Montrose have his freedom on equal terms with the rest.

"He led the attack on our town—planned it we have heard from his own lips. He must be held till you have some officer of rank of ours to exchange for him!"

Old Tom was firm when he spoke to the admiral. But when Alice, sobbing took one of his great hands in hers and told him how she loved that wounded prisoner—that if he must stay she would ask to go back, marry him and share his fate—the old sailor broke down.

"For your sake, little one—I'll see he is sent

with the rest!" he said, as he told her to dry up her tears before she set his pumps agoing.

Two hours went by and with the terms all settled, Long Tom went back on board, honored by a captain's salute from the admiral with a white flag at the fore.

The latter was astounded, when the long gun from the sloop returned gun for gun, in masterly style, showing that the Yankees could handle their monster cannon as if it was but a toy.

With the understanding that the British admiral should send every impressed American from his fleet, in one of his corvettes to an anchorage off Salem, where the men could be counted, examined and the exchange made—and this reduced to writing, signed and sealed, Long Tom Dart made sail on his return.

Lowering his white flag after the fleet had been left astern, he made his way slowly back to port against wind and tide. It was night—when with three signal lights mast-headed—red, white and blue, he beat up into the harbor and dropped anchor in his former berth.

CHAPTER XXI.

ABIJAH DART WONDER-STRICKEN.

AFTER the Terror went out upon her dangerous venture, Abijah Dart took it into his head to visit the prisoners at the jail and see how they were faring. He was convalescing fast and hoped soon to be able to take his old position as third officer of the Terror, on the duty-list again.

The bullet had been reached and removed from his shoulder on the side opposite to where it entered, and a shattered collar-bone seemed to be "knitting" by the way it pained.

He found the prisoners decently lodged, though crowded and better fed by their own acknowledgments than they had been before they were captured.

After leaving the jail, one of the guard just relieved, approached him.

The man was not prepossessing—his eyes were red, small and sunken—his face had a livid, scrofulous look—his form was short, shrunken and crooked.

"Don't know me, hey, 'Bijah Dart?" said this person, in a harsh, croaking voice.

"Yes—I think I do. You're a chicken out o' old Jim Boggs's nest—seems to me, by your looks—old Jim, that used to wheel clay down at the brick-yard. He burnt his inwards out with raw rum and got a place up in the graveyard to cool off in. You look as if you was a-travelin' in the same tracks. Your name is Sam—isn't it?"

"Yes—I'm Sam Boggs, an' if I take a drop o' rum now and then, can't see as it's anybody's dicker but mine! If it burns, it's my throat gets the scald!"

"I don't know, Sam—I don't know! I've hearn tell you have a right likely wife. It may hurt her to see you a-pisonin' of yourself!"

"Consarn it, no! She's like some other women I know—got more'n one string to pull when she ties her bonnet on. I could tell you something that would make you stare goggle-eyed, if I wanted to. Folks may think 'cause my eyes are weak an' watery I can't see nothing. But I can tell you the man or woman that takes Sam Boggs for a blind man is a fool. You think Sally Ann Dewlittle is jest like an angel and never lets no other man pour soft-sodder into her ears—but if you'd seen what I did one night not long ago, I reckon you'd go slow in that quarter!"

"What did you see! No lying to me, Sam Boggs; I can shake the life out of you with one hand!"

"Consarn it, you needn't b'ile over till I get the fire started! Come to one side, and I'll tell you. I was a-goin' by the deacon's house the night you-uns got back old man Hurd's fishin'-smack. 'Twas about ten o'clock—I'd been down to Black Ben's to get a drop, and was on my way home.

"A part o' the window-curtain had blown to one side and I saw a tall chap in sojer-clothes, with a black beard over his face, a-kneelin' down afore your Sally Ann and a-kissin' of her hand as if he'd like to eat it up!"

"Sam Boggs—I—I believe you're lying—if you are I'll choke what little life there is left out of you!"

"Hold on—ask her if it isn't true, and if she says it isn't, choke all you want to. But you'd better hear it all while I'm in a talkin' humor!"

"Go on—go on! I'll listen!"

"Wal—as I was a-sayin', I seen the feller on his knees there and I knowed him in a minute. He was a recruitin' sergeant who called himself Trefoil, that took lodgin' at our house the night afore. And he seemed to say somethin' that Sally Ann didn't like, and she clawed right into them black whiskers o' his and peeled 'em right off and lefthis face as bare as an egg. And in a minute he was on his feet, and she, too, and she called him a spy right to his face. And he was, too. But for all that she helped him hide when old Tom Dart and all the rest of you were huntin' for him high and low. An' I reckon she told him where to find her skiff to git away in, for him and it went missin' in a hurry and the boat never came back.

But the man did—if he hadn't you wouldn't have got that bullet into your shoulder. He came back and he is here now, and your gal sees him a'most every day, while my wife, consarn the false creetur', just worships the cussed heathen!"

"Who is it—where is he?" thundered Abijah, now full of excitement.

"Why, it's that Captain Montrose—him that led the attack two nights after he got away, as I've told you, and he is at our house now, with my wife a-waitin' on him, givin' him the best to eat and drink her money can buy, while I'm living on guard rations, and can't raise a shillin' to wet my throat with."

"Sam—you seem to tell a straight story. If it is true, that captain is in a worse box than André was in the Revolution. For he surely was a spy, here in disguise, finding out all he could before he made an attack. Keep a still tongue in your head till I see you again. Here are five silver dollars for pocket-money. Say nothing, and I'll set a trap for that scoundrel. When its jaws close, there'll be a rope around his neck and a knot under his ear."

"I'll keep mum, 'Bijah, I'll keep mum."

And Boggs grinned all over his repulsive face when he pocketed more money than he had possessed before all at once within his memory and hurried away.

Abijah Dart should have thought twice before he gave a confirmed drunkard money enough to enable him to go on a spree and destroy the little caution the poor creature had.

But his mind was so taken up with the story and thoughts of how he ought now to act to get Montrose properly dealt with, he thought of nothing else.

CHAPTER XXII.

A TERRIBLE SCENE—A DEATH-BLOW TO LOVE. SALLY ANN DOOLITTLE was first, last and all in the heart of Abijah Dart. He had loved her from his earliest childhood. He had known no other passion. And until he had heard the story of that hour—the tale told by Sam Boggs, not a pang of jealousy had ever entered his manly heart.

But now, if all he had heard was true, the woman he almost adored was *false*. She had listened to, protected and assisted the escape of a spy. And even now while a prisoner, if the story was true, she visited him, knowing his true character.

Oh, could it be? The thought was maddening! It worried him so that he could not make up his mind how to act—what first to do.

Whether to get the Town Council to convene and then *act*, or at once to confront his betrothed and to charge her with this cruel treachery and hear her defense, if she had any to make.

Undecided—almost wild with conflicting thoughts, he entered the Doolittle mansion, where he had been quartered since he was brought on shore wounded.

Sally was in the sitting-room, alone. She was working at some simple embroidery, but when he entered she laid her work down, and rising, advanced to meet and kiss him as she had done many a time before.

"Stand back! Stand back!" he cried, with a gesture such as he never had made in her presence before. "Judas, false Judas, betrayed his Master with a *kiss*! Never—never put your lips to mine again!"

"Abijah Dart, have you been *drinking*?" she asked, her face white with a sudden fear.

"Yes—yes, from the bitterest cup a mortal man ever drained! How can you look me in the face—false, *false* woman?"

"Abijah Dart, I believe you have gone crazy!"

"Not yet, Sally—not yet—but I shall! I've work to do! When your *lover* dangles from a gallows high as that where Haman swung, then—then you and I will both go *mad*!"

"My lover, Abijah Dart?"

"Yes—he who knelt in this very room at your feet and covered your hands with kisses! He whom you hid, protected and assisted to escape, when he was plotting to destroy the town—to bring death and destruction upon us all!"

"Oh, Abijah!"

"Silence! I see *guilt* in your white face! I see *guilt* in your shrinking form! Guilt in the tears starting from your eyes! Close—close your false lips—I will not hear a word!"

Turning he left the room and house, while she, with a moan of agony, fell fainting to the floor.

Her mother heard her fall and rushed terror-stricken into the room. With a scream on her lips which called every servant in the mansion to her aid, she raised the unconscious girl in her arms, bore her to a bed and sent for the family doctor and the deacon in hot haste.

When the former came restoratives were applied, and the poor girl, yet violently hysterical and weeping, was restored to consciousness.

The cause of her distress could not be learned; she only cried and mourned for Abijah to come back and hear her.

"She and 'Bijah have had a quarrel—I can't understand it!" was what Mrs. Doolittle said to the deacon when he hurried in. "They were as loving as two *turke* doves at breakfast-time!" she added. "Have you seen him?"

"Yes—just for a second on the street, as I hurried home. He said he wanted me to call the Town Council together inside of two hours. He had business to put before us, that would end in a hanging-match for somebody. Then he tore off on a run, just as if he was crazy!"

"He is crazy! And so will I be soon!" sobbed Sally Ann, who heard the remarks of her father.

"What on earth is the matter 'twixt you and 'Bijah?" asked her father.

"I cannot tell! I cannot tell!" said the girl, sobbing as if her heart would break. "He never—never spoke cross words to me before!"

Abijah Dart first intended to go and charge Montrose to his face with his perfidy, but a second thought told him it would be better to wait until he had made out his charges before the Town Council and had steps taken to hold the wounded prisoner as a *spy* deserving death.

He did not pause to think how much his own personal grievance overtopped all patriotic duty—how his jealousy had nearly crazed him—how, refusing to hear her say one word in explanation or defense, he had cruelly repulsed the advances of the girl whom he really loved to distraction, and left her completely overwhelmed by his cruelty.

Walking off miles, to try and get calm and bring his mind into a reasonable quiet, poor Abijah tramped on, scarce seeing or caring to see a person whom he passed, though he was repeatedly spoken to by men who knew him. He had passed the town limits before he realized it, and then he turned and came slowly back.

He felt as if he could not return to the mansion, and he went to the house owned by his father where his good old mother lived.

"What ails ye, son 'Bijah? You're whiter than chalk! What is it?" asked his mother, when he went in and sat down.

"Oh, mother, don't ask me! My heart is breaking. You'll know all soon enough!" he moaned.

"Daddy isn't dead, is he?"

"No, mother, no, not that I know of. I wish I was though!"

"'Bijah, that's a wicked wish. The Lord gave life, and only He should take it away. Your wound has worn you out."

"Tisn't that, mother! 'Tisn't that! They've never heard me groan since I was hurt. Oh, Sally, Sally, how could she treat me so, me that would have died for her!"

"You haven't quarreled with Sally Ann, son 'Bijah?"

"We are parted forever, my mother! I never wish to see her again!"

"Oh, 'Bijah! surely there is some mistake. A better, purer, nicer girl don't breathe the air of heaven!"

"You don't know, mother—you don't know. To her very face I proved her guilt!"

CHAPTER XXIII.

SAM BOGGS ON A DRUNK LETS THE CAT OUT OF THE BAG.

As soon as he parted from Abijah Dart, after making his revelations, Sam Boggs took a bee-line for "Black Ben's"—a low groggeries near the water-side, where *rum* was cheap and plenty, such as it was—a fiery distillation made from refuse sugar and molasses in the State and sold before age had softened its worst qualities.

He had money now, and after paying up an old debt, he poured down glass after glass, until he felt big enough to claim all Salem as his own property.

Staggering drunk, belligerent and ugly, he entered his residence and met Mrs. Boggs on the first floor. She was just coming down from the room of her favorite boarder, with the dishes he had emptied at his early supper.

She was dressed in her very best apparel, her cheeks were rosy and her eyes bright, she looked happy and charming till she saw him and recognized the condition he was in.

"Drinking again, you *brute*!" she cried out in a tone of bitter scorn.

"Yes—drinking again, you *hussy*! I calc'late to drink whenever I want to and not to ask you whether I may or not!"

She stood for a moment silent with wonder. Generally, when she took him to task, he would whine out some maudlin excuse and creep away out of her sight to sleep off the effects of the poison stuff he had taken. Open rebellion and daring defiance was so new to her that it almost took her breath away.

"You low-lived *cur*! You wretched beast!"

Deliberately, while she hurled these epithets at him, she placed her tray of dishes on the table. Then she rolled up the dress-sleeve on her right arm—it was muscular as well as white and pretty, and turning to a closet reached in and took out a large raw-hide. He had seen and felt it before and had fell cowering under its weight at her feet, pleading for mercy.

Not so now—he did not flinch or draw back

when he saw her step slowly toward him, her eyes flashing and her face dark with anger.

He put his hand to his side and drew out a bayonet which he wore as a jail-guard.

"Raise that raw-hide to strike me, Jennie Boggs, and I'll kill you in your tracks. I'll not even wait to let you see your lover up-stairs swing from the gallows-tree, as he *will* before the sun of another day goes down!"

"Sam Boggs, what do you mean?" she cried, her face turning white, as for the first time in her married life she let the uplifted whip fall at her side instead of on his back.

"I mean just what I say, Jennie Boggs! Drop that whip—drop it or I'll show you who is *master* here. It isn't your *lover*, Sergeant Trefoil first, and Captain Montrose now—both one and the same for all that! You needn't stare! Sally Doolittle has them whiskers and the dear mustache he wore when he enlisted me for a blind, the dratted British *spy*!"

She had dropped the whip at his command, for his red eyes gleamed like orbs of living fire and he looked as if he would rather murder her than not.

"Sam—poor Sam! The liquor has *crazed* you! You don't know what you are saying!"

"Yes I do—Jane Boggs! I'm a little drunk, I know, but sober enough to take care of myself, and you, too. I've stood your way of goin' on, as long as I mean to. I've watched you when you thought I was drunk or asleep, and I know just what a false, heartless thing you are! As for that chap up-stairs—the rope is twisted that'll swing him. I've set them on his track that will never leave it till he gets his dues—the dirty *spy*, to come here to win a wife away from an honest man like me!"

"A spy? Sam, you are raving. He is a *prisoner of war*!"

"It's a lie! Disguised as Sergeant Trefoil he came here as a *spy*, found out all he could, got off in Sal Doolittle's boat and then led the British forces here to kill, burn and destroy! He'll be tried and hung to-morrow! So, take comfort over it, while I take another drink and then have a nap. When I wake up—I want my supper! D'ye hear, Jane Boggs?"

"Yes, Samuel—I hear!" she gasped, trembling, while he took a bottle from a pocket, raised it to his lips and drank as long as he had breath to hold while the liquor went down.

Then he staggered over to a cushioned settee in one corner and threw himself at full length upon it. In a few minutes he was snoring like a gorged hog.

She had not moved. A look almost like white despair had settled on her pretty face. Now, satisfied that he was in a drunken stupor in which he might lay for hours, she hurried up to the room where she had left Captain Montrose in bed.

To her wonder, he was up and dressed.

"I heard every word that brute uttered," he said to her. "You left my door ajar, he spoke so loud, I did not lose a sentence. My life indeed is in peril—if it is discovered, as he said, that I played the part of Sergeant Trefoil, which is *true*, they will prove I was a *spy*, and no power on earth can save me!"

"I will save you or die with you! I *loved* the man who came as Sergeant Trefoil first—I love Arthur Montrose now! It is almost night. As soon as darkness covers the streets I will take means to get you away—far, far from this hated town!"

"Oh, Mrs. Boggs—Jennie—dear Jennie! Can you aid me to escape? I am lame, and very weak—I can go but a little way—I know not how it can be done!"

"I do, captain, I do! That brute is asleep. All my other lodgers are gone. My one servant, off now on an errand, has a sick mother whom she wants to see. I will send her there to pass the night, soon as she comes back. Then, I'll go out and hire a chaise to go to Beverly alone in. Instead of to Beverly, we'll drive miles and miles away to some lone spot where we can be happy in our love. I have money, plenty of it, all in gold, enough to keep us years and years with every comfort."

"Alas, for me no place on this soil will be safe. As a *spy*, most likely a price put on my head, I will be hunted down. Once out upon the sea, if it was in an open boat, I might reach some vessel in the fleet, or get once more upon my own noble frigate, and there I could defy the whole Yankee nation."

"Then we will go where we can find a boat or vessel and escape as you desire. You would not, when safe, desert the woman who risks everything for you?"

"Oh, Jennie, could you deem me so heartless? I would never—never repay your noble sacrifice by cruelty."

"I feel it, my brave, dear Arthur. Lay down and rest. I will bring up more food and wine. You will need it to give you strength. Then I will hasten and get all ready for flight. I will be cautious, secret as death itself. Be ready when I come. I will leave the chaise and horse in a dark alley back of the house, and if you cannot walk I can carry you to it. I am strong, and my love adds to my power."

"That brute below—will he not wake before you are ready?"

"No, Arthur, no! He sleeps for hours when liquor holds him in its grasp. If he woke and was in our way, I'd, I'd kill him for your sake I do believe!"

"Brave—brave Jennie. The shades of night are falling—haste, my precious love. Every hour of delay is fraught with danger! If I am taken by those who seek my life I am lost—lost to you and to myself!"

"I know it. Wait and hope."

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE TOWN COUNCIL AND ITS WORK.

CONVENED at a most sudden call—not knowing what emergency was at hand to make it necessary, the Town Council met at as early an hour as they could be got together.

Abijah Dart, who had told Deacon Doolittle that he had a matter of the most vital importance for them to consider, was one of the first in the council-chamber.

His face was pale, his eyes sunken as if death had a grasp upon his vitals—his expression sad beyond description.

Not until every member was present, and the good deacon in the chair, did he speak.

Then, rising, he said:

"This day, by accident, I learned that which, while it has blasted every hope of my young life, it is necessary you should know—that steps may be taken to mete out punishment to the guilty! In this town, perchance thinking he is safe, because he is now a prisoner taken in action, is a man who came here in disguise—dressed as an American soldier, professing to be a sergeant recruiting men for our army now on the Western lakes. In that disguise he learned how we were prepared for defense, where our forts and batteries were situated, and got a knowledge which enabled the enemy almost to succeed in the attempt to capture the town.

"All this and more I can prove. And now—most painful of all—for it is what blights my life, I must state that this spy, under the guise of *love*, so worked upon the sympathy of one of the fairest maidens of our town that, knowing his character, actually after denouncing him to his face as a *spy*, in her own father's house, this girl hid him from search and actually furnished him a boat in which to escape to the British fleet, in which he held a captain's rank!"

A groan broke from the lips of Deacon Doolittle. Whiter and whiter had his face grown while Abijah Dart was speaking, and now a look of unutterable agony came over his countenance.

"Could my Sally Ann have done this?" he moaned.

For he remembered the visit of Trefoil—his sudden disappearance and the missing boat, and it all seemed to come before him in a flash.

Abijah Dart bowed his head forward upon his hands and wept like a child under punishment.

"What witnesses have you to sustain these charges?" asked Simon Blossom—the coolest member of them all.

"First—I have Samuel Boggs, who saw this spy upon his knees before her of whom I have spoken, covering her hands with kisses—who saw his false beard cast off and heard her call him a *spy*—who saw him led off to safety when we were all on the search the night we recovered Hurd's boat and knew how he escaped. I have not questioned him closely. I left that for you!"

"And, though it is harder than death for me to say it—let her be called. Oh, I would give my life if she could deny what I have told you—deny that he whom she knew and saved as a *spy*, has been visited by her time after time, as the wounded prisoner, Captain Montrose of the British frigate *Galatea*!"

Again a groan broke from the wretched deacon.

"Ay, let her be sent for!" he cried. "She will not tell a lie. And if all this be true—no longer shall my roof shelter one who has brought dishonor on my name—has darkened my declining life! Though she hath been dearer to me than life itself, the pride and joy of my home, and my heart breaks while I speak, I will bid her go forth and never show her face to me again!"

"Who will go to call her?" asked a member.

"That will I do," said Simon Blossom, "and I will speak gently to her, for while I doubt not brave Abijah Dart believes all that he hath told us, I, for one, give no credit to that drunken wretch, Sam Boggs. He never draws a sober breath when he can beg, buy or steal rum to pour down his hoggish throat."

"Hold the council together, deacon—I will soon return and bring the maiden with me."

"We will wait," said the deacon. "And go you, Abijah Dart, to the jail and get an armed guard, officered and strong in numbers. Let them occupy the room in which this man Montrose is now laying wounded, as I hear, and never lose sight of him one second until we are ready for his trial."

"That seen to, first of all, then secure and bring the man Boggs here to testify to all he knows."

"I need not tell you to make haste—you will not tarry in doing all your duty. I shall know no rest, no peace, till all this is over—perhaps not then!"

The deacon tried to give his orders firmly—but his voice was weak and low and tears were coursing down his cheeks while he spoke.

Simon Blossom and Abijah went out together, each upon his separate errand.

Silent and sad, too much oppressed with the grief of their unhappy president to talk, the other members kept silent in their seats.

It was not far from the Town Hall to the mansion of the deacon, but nearly a half-hour passed before Simon Blossom returned.

He entered with Sally Ann leaning on his arm heavily, as if she had scarce strength to stand. Her face was white as new-drifted snow and she did not raise her eyes, except with one wild glance around the room to see who was there.

"Sit down, my child! We will not question thee till all the rest are here."

It was the deacon who spoke, almost choking with the effort to be calm.

In silence she obeyed.

Almost a half-hour more went by. The jail in a distant part of the city required a longer walk to reach it, go to the house of Boggs and thence return.

Then, suddenly, rapid footsteps were heard outside. Every member of the council rose and gazed eagerly toward the door.

Abijah Dart, breathless from haste, rushed into the room.

"The prisoner, Montrose, has escaped!" he cried. "In company with Jennie Boggs he has fled from the town! They were seen together in a chaise! The husband—waking from a drunken stupor says he saw and tried to stop them—he is coming close at hand *under guard*, for I would not trust him."

CHAPTER XXV.

THE ORDEAL—GOLD THROUGH THE FIRE COMES OUT GOLD STILL.

EVEN while Abijah Dart was speaking, between two armed guards, Sam Boggs staggered into the room.

"How did that man escape? Speak, Sam Boggs, and tell the *truth*! If you helped him off, we'll swing you in *his* place!" cried the deacon.

"I didn't, so help me—I DIDN'T! I went home pretty full and had words with my woman and she was goin' to thrash me like she often does. But I pulled my bayonet and told her I'd stick her if she did, and she cooled down and I went to sleep on a lounge. I don't know how long I laid there afore I heard a whisperin' in the hall, and I started up and I just seen him and her a-puttin' out o' the back door! I hollered for 'em to stop and put arter 'em fast as I could, but she had him out in the alleya-liftin' him into a chaise as I got there. I made a grab for her as she jumped in, and tore half her gown away a-tryin' to hold her. But she put the gad on the horse, and he jumped and the wheel hit me and knocked me eend over eend, and they went a-gallopin' off I don't know where. And she took every dollar there was in the house—almost a hand-trunk full o' gold pieces!"

"Guards—take Sam out in the fresh air and walk him around till he sobers up. Keep within call, for we'll want to question him further when he is fit to talk!"

The guards wheeled, and with Sam between them retired from the room.

As soon as the doors closed, Simon Blossom rose and said:

"Deacon—I move that without a question, till she is *all through*, your daughter here tells us in her own way, all she knows, or has known of this man Montrose from first to last—describes each meeting and what occurred at it, from the beginning! And if she don't show that she is a pure and true woman, without flaw or reproach—I'll eat my boots right before you all!"

Thus spoke Simon Blossom, and the deacon, bowing his head, said:

"I am willing. Sally—dear child, go on. And tell the *truth*, if it breaks my heart!"

She bowed her head, and without rising spoke all in the room heard every word.

"I first saw Captain Montrose on his frigate, the Galatea, when I risked my life to save the lives of Abijah and Elnathan Dart. If I spoke to him then at all, it was to refuse a glass of wine he offered me in the presence of the admiral and his officers.

"The next time was when my father introduced a *Sergeant Trefoil* to me and my mother at our supper-table. After supper my father went out on business, leaving me alone with *his* guest and visitor, not mine, my mother being in and out of the room often—busied in her household duties. This supposed sergeant began telling romantic stories of his adventures, and after a while branched off into compliments upon my beauty and talking in a way I did not like. I rebuked his boldness in as modest a way as I could, not wishing to offend a man my father had introduced into his house.

"He grew bolder, and kneeling down, seized my hand and kissed it, vowing love in passion-

ate terms. He angered me so much that I struck him full in the face and knocked off his false beard. Then I knew him—called him a spy and a scoundrel for daring to speak of love to an American girl, whom he knew to be betrothed to one of the men whom she had saved from a shameful death on his own ship. At that moment you, my father, announced that the Terror had come in and a boat had been captured with Englishmen on board. You then hurried off. He crying out he was lost, that if taken his life was forfeit, declared he was no spy, only his mad love for me, seen, as he said, on his ship in beauty and distress, had made him run the risk of life and liberty. While never for an instant swerving from my own truth, I pitied him, told him where to hide from present search and how to find the boat in which he escaped. If *pity* is a crime and *mercy* to a hunted man a wrong, then am I criminal and wrong!

"Since then I have seen him three times. First, when I carried wine and broth to *all* the wounded prisoners alike—not dreaming of seeing *him*. I held but a word of converse with him, and it was to bid him never to speak to me again.

"Next when I was asked to go with Mrs. Dalrymple and her daughters to visit him as their friend, in their company, and I had not a word to say to him that I remember now.

"Third and last, I went at request of Captain Dart, with Alice Dalrymple, who is engaged to marry him, to his room as *her* companion. I did not speak to him, but left them alone the few minutes she was there—then with her came away.

"And now, as the Father above hears what I say, never by word or look, by thought or action, have I exhibited love or even interest for this man whose name is before you. Never for one second have I been untrue to the only love I ever knew!"

"Oh, Sally—Sally—how cruel I have been! Forgive—*forgive me!*"

And Abijah, with streaming eyes, reached out his arms toward her.

"Silence—Abijah Dart! Speak never again to me. You have brought shame upon my name before these good and noble men. You have made my own father doubt his child. You listened to the foul mouthings of a drunkard, and in my wild despair would not let me speak to defend myself from your cruel taunts. You, even *you*, have doubted the heart that never throbbed with love that was not all your own. If I forgave, I never could forget! Go *your* way, as I go *mine*! Henceforth we meet no more!"

"Father of mercy! It is *too* much! I cannot bear it and live!" groaned the unhappy man, as he bowed down his head and wept.

"Doth any of the council wish to question the witness further?" asked the deacon in a low and tremulous voice.

No one answered. All were still for a time, and then Simon Blossom spoke up and said:

"All of you councilmen but me are husbands and fathers! You know what pride you take in those you love! I am like a lone bark on a wide, wide sea—no kith or kin to love. But if I had a child so pure and brave, so good and true, so spotless in all that makes the name of WOMAN bright and holy, as this child of yours, Jasper Doolittle, I would hold her more precious than all the gems that ever shone on earth—as the greatest treasure ever Heaven gave to man!"

"I move, *first*, that we offer a reward of one thousand pounds for Arthur Montrose, delivered to us dead or alive.

"Second, declaring that not a shade of evil obscure the fair fame of this brave girl, made evident by a story no one can gainsay, we escort her home in a body, and at her parents' door express our belief that in all New England her equal cannot be found in all things pure and good."

The deacon wept with joy as the motions were carried without debate, without dissent.

And poor Abijah—wild with grief, went to his home alone, while Sam Boggs, discharged without any further questions, returned to his house—for once its master—for he also was alone.

In a body the council went to the Doolittle mansion, the deacon, side by side with his honored child, too glad to speak. She had met every charge with the holy truth—she had faced the worst and come out from the ordeal nobly justified even in her mercy to a man whom she did not know to be a spy until long after her pity had saved his life.

CHAPTER XXVI.

AFLOAT IN A LEAKY BOAT—TERRIBLE TRIAL.

AWAY—away from the shouting fiend, who almost tore the garments from her slender form, lashing the horse into its utmost speed, Jennie Boggs dashed along the dark and narrow street in which she had left the chaise, toward the open country northward of the town.

Montrose, so weak she had almost to carry him in her flight from the house, sunk back in the roomy chaise, groaning as it bounded along, wrenching his wounded form and almost shaking life from his bruised and shattered body.

"We must not pause a second, dear Arthur, for that brute will spread the alarm, and pursue at once be made."

"Go on—go on!" he said. "I will not murmur, no matter how I suffer. Go on until we can strike some little port, some river or bay upon the ocean-side, and find a boat. Get me afloat, only once afloat, where I am at home upon the sea, and we are saved!"

"I will!" was her answer, as she struck a road leading toward Gloucester on the sea.

Still at a gallop, rushing madly on, she kept the road almost as much by chance as skill, leaving Salem and its dangers in the rear at every jump.

Mile after mile, leagues now on leagues, until the tired horse lagged and could scarcely keep a feeble trot. Night had passed swiftly apace and day was not far away, when their road bending eastward came so near the sea they could hear the sound of breaking waves upon the rocks.

"It is music to my ear!" said Montrose, faint with fatigue. "There is a house—it is a fisherman's hut, I think—there are nets before the door. Stop—see if we cannot hire or buy, or, if we must, TAKE a boat!"

Jennie Boggs reined in the panting horse, which could scarcely move faster than a walk, before a low hovel hardly fit to be called a house. The gray of dawn was looming like a mist over the water to the east, as she leaped to the ground and called aloud before the door, if any one lived in the place to come out.

An answer, gruff and short, was heard—a light was seen a moment later through great cracks in the wretched hut, and an old man came to the door, clad in garments that hung in rags about his bent form.

"What d'ye want?" he growled, in a surly tone. "Who calls old Sandy Grant up from a bed of misery and pain?"

"A man and woman who are on an errand of life and death!" she said. "Our horse is broken down. We want a boat to take us on to Gloucester by sea! We have gold, and will pay well for what we ask!"

"My boat is old and leaky. My bones are racked with rheumatic pains. I cannot go. My only boy was taken off by the accursed British almost a year ago, and I am alone!"

"Keep our horse and chaise here! Let us take your boat and go, and we will leave a handful of gold in her place till we bring her back. Here—see!"

And Jennie handed out a purse all full of shining gold and held it in front of his wrinkled face.

"The boat is there—take her and go. Lead your horse to yonder shed. Gloucester is but a few miles up the coast—take the old boat and go!"

And the man clutched the purse and laughed as he weighted the coin in his trembling, shriveled hands.

Drinking some wine from a flask she carried, Montrose, leaning on her arm, tottered down a shelving beach to a narrow cove, where an old shallop, with one mast and an old patched sail, lay moored to a rude pier of rotten logs.

"It is a wretched thing, but better than nothing. We will take it and go," said Montrose, as he crawled into the stern.

"Wait till I go back and get my gold; it is in the chaise and a bottle of wine and a little food," she said.

"Make haste, dear girl, day is coming fast and we must be out at sea with speed. If we are pursued and seen this wretched craft would do little toward carrying us out of danger."

She hurried back, got her little trunk of gold and the wine and lunch she had put in the chaise when getting ready for their flight.

"Push off, dear, then pull on the rope that hangs beside the mast there and it will hoist the sail," said Montrose, who had the tiller in his hand ready to steer her out to sea as soon as way would make her feel the helm.

"She leaks, but there's a bailin'-pot in the bilge. Steer her due east till ye clear the p'int, then haul up for Round Rock shoal. Leave it to port—make Norman's Woe ahead and steer right in to town!"

This was what the old man screeched as on crutches he came down to see them off.

By this time the sail was up and began to draw, and with the wind almost astern the boat crept slowly out from shore.

Faster—as they left the land, for the breeze freshened and the old boat creaked and groaned like a troubled spirit as the water roughened and the wind strained the wretched sail and poor old mast.

Montrose did not refuse when Jennie poured him out a hearty draught of wine into the old battered tin she found. It was the "bailing-pot" old Sandy Grant had spoken of. He made her take some also.

Then he bade her look around the boat to see if a compass could be found—water, provisions, what might be needed yet.

She found no compass. A small keg of water, some fish-hooks and lines, a pipe and a black plug of tobacco, which last he bade her cast into the sea, since he had no use for stuff like that.

An old hat and coat of oiled canvas, a pair of sea-boots half worn out—that was all that she could discover.

"It is a poor fit-out for a voyage, but I pray Heaven ours may not be a very lengthy one. You'll have to bail the water out, my dear, pretty often, for, as the old man says, she leaks, and badly, too."

Montrose tried to speak cheerfully. He was heading all the while for the open sea—not for Norman's Woe, or any other headland—but out, so he could shape a course which in time would carry him to the fleet—his only hope.

Brave and unshaking, her eyes bright with love for the man she had risked all to save, the woman threw the water from the leaky boat, and when she saw the spray dash in upon his shrinking form, she wrapped the old sea-coat about him and laughed at the odd look it gave him.

For her own discomfiture—all too lightly clad for the chilling dampness of the wind, she had no complaint to make, though he could see she suffered.

Out further and further on the sea—no sails in sight—he began to feel hopeful once again, for if not soon pursued, they would not be seen from shore, and could take a course that would trend toward his only point of safety.

On, still on—the wind freshening until he feared the mast and sail would bear no more, and then the shore could scarce be seen so far was it astern.

Now steering by the sun, already past meridian hight, he headed southward, bringing the wind almost abeam.

The poor old boat reeled and tumbled along now, and, too weak to do it himself, Montrose had to tell Jennie how to reef down the sail, for the boat had more than she could bear when the sheet was drawn aft and the sail flattened in.

She leaked faster too, and Jennie kept warm with labor and cheerful too, for he told her that one-half day and night on that course, even at their slow rate of speed ought to take them to the vicinity where he hoped to find the fleet.

It was almost night. The boat rose and fell on great heaving seas, groaning and creaking as if she would fall apart, but no worse than when they started in the poor worn-out hulk.

But the wind, now drawing eastward, came more fresh and so cold that it seemed beyond endurance. Poor Jennie Boggs in her haste had brought no wraps—as he boasted, her husband had torn full half her outer dress from her form, and now wet with spray, for she forced the oil-coat upon the wounded captain, she shivered as with an ague. He alone knew how to steer and to care for the main sheet, which led to a cleat by his side aft, and these duties were all he could do in his exhausted, wretched state.

Night was on them now. Half water-logged, having to bail every half-hour at least, the boat plunged on, heading southward as well as he could by stars seen now and then through rifts in the black, smoking clouds.

Almost perishing, Jennie Boggs shared the last of the wine with the captain, and now without food or any drink but some stale water in a filthy keg, they drove over the angry sea.

"Oh, Arthur—I believe that we shall perish. I am like ice from head to foot—I can scarcely move!"

"There is but one way for us to bear this biting blast any longer!" was his answer, for he was shivering too, better covered though he was. "Get the two oars and bring me the end of the painter, the long rope fastened to an iron staple in the bow of the boat."

With difficulty, weak, exhausted, almost numb with cold, she obeyed.

Knotting the rope around the oars in the middle, he cast them over the side for a drag, put the helm alee and brought the boat head to wind. Then he had Jennie lower the sail and draw its coarse folds over them both to break the wind and spray.

The boat rode more easy head to wind and sea, the drag acting like an anchor, and once more their bodies felt a little warmth as they crouched under the canvas covering.

They were very weak and faint—they could not sleep, and often poor Jennie had to bail the boat, for the water gained too fast to be neglected long.

"Arthur—I used to think it would be fearful hard to die—wretched though I was, tied to a brutal sot, and struggling to make a livelihood for both. But here, on the lonely sea, with you by my side, I could die without a sigh breaking from my lips."

"Don't talk of death, Jennie! It makes me shudder, seaman as I am. We will come out all right yet. Though not under sail we are driving before wind and sea upon our course. The fleet cannot be many miles away. If we can hold up another day we'll sight some ship and be saved."

"I pray Heaven, yes," she murmured, as she nestled down under the canvas out of the bitter coldness of the wind.

It seemed to them as if the night had no end—day was so long coming.

But at last, gray and dismal, no sun in sight, day came. And away on their lee—so far they

could just see it when the boat rose to the crest of the huge waves, was land.

"Do you think you can stand the cold, Jennie, if we take in the drag and try and make sail once more?"

Montrose asked this when looking all around—no sign of a ship in sight, he felt that they must soon find help or perish.

"I am so weak I do not think I could pull in those oars—I fear I could not even raise the sail."

Her voice, low and tremulous, told how nearly gone was the power which had sustained her so far in her work.

"Then we will drift on and trust to Providence, for I cannot move my stiffened limbs—I am helpless as a creeping child."

Hardly able, when the water up about their feet told that bailing must be done, poor Jennie slowly lifted it out again and again.

Nearer and nearer the land rose now—their drift was toward the worst of all dangers to a seaman's eye—a *lee shore*.

Faint—no food or drink—nature yielding to the strain, both of the weary ones fell asleep! Not the sleep of rest. Horrible fancies came in dreams, and Montrose woke shrieking:

"Cast off the rope! Cast off the rope! I'll not be hung!"

The boat was half full of water, and Jennie sprung to find the bailing-cup, which was afloat.

"Oh, Arthur, what is that?" she cried, pointing ahead with a shaking hand.

"A ship—thank Heaven—a ship!" he cried, and striving to rise, he fell forward helpless on the gunwale of the boat.

"A ship—a ship!" she screamed. "We will be saved and live and love together!"

She staggered to his side, with the energy of despair lifted his form from the narrow plank on which it lay, dashed water in his face and brought back the consciousness he had lost.

"We are seen—there is a boat upon the water!" she gasped; then she broke down and fell at his feet in a swoon so like death, he dared not look into her face a second time.

"Who are you?—where are you from?" he asked, feebly, when he saw men in uniform bending over to lift him up.

"A boat from his Majesty's sloop-of-war Corinne!" was the answer—scarcely heard, for he was fainting when they spoke.

CHAPTER XXVII.

HOT AND HEAVY ALL AROUND—PUNISHMENT WORSE THAN DEATH.

WHEN Montrose again had a knowledge that he yet lived, he found himself on a cot in the captain's cabin of the sloop-of-war, a surgeon whom he knew bending over him, and other officers standing near.

On another cot, close by, her white face scarce showing life, lay the frail partner of his flight—she who had risked everything to save his life.

"You have had a close call, Captain Montrose," said the surgeon. "When you were brought on board from that sinking boat, you were so nearly dead, I feared no skill could bring you to!"

"And she—she who saved me from a shameful death upon the gallows-tree—what is her condition?" asked Montrose, glancing at poor Mrs. Boggs.

"She lives and may pull through. In her youth yet, she may come up, though life flickers in her nearly frozen veins! We will do all we can to save her, as well as you!"

"Where are we? Is the fleet at hand?"

"No, captain—it is five leagues away to the southward. Under a flag of truce, we are anchored off the port of Salem, waiting to exchange impressed American men for English prisoners!"

"Ah! Off Salem? On your lives, let no one from there see me or learn by any chance that I and yonder lady are in this ship!"

"Your wish shall be respected!" said the commander of the Corinne.

He had been promoted into his ship, from the first lieutenancy of the Galatea, within the year. So Montrose knew him well and could trust to his care.

Hours went by, and the crash of boats against the ship's side—the tramp of feet coming and going on the deck, cries of joy from prisoners released—all these sounds were heard by the invalid captain who lay helpless on his cot. Heard, too, by Jennie Boggs, who lay facing him—thinking only of him and the love she had proven in his dark hour of need.

"Are you not nearly through? How long must you lie off this hated town?" asked Montrose, as the day wore on and the ship yet lay at anchor.

"Not much longer, my good captain. The last boat is on shore for her load of released men!" was the answer which he got.

Jennie's eyes met his and a faint smile brightened her wan face. She did not try to speak. She was very weak, and what she would she could not say, for at no time now were they left alone.

The surgeon or some officer was in the cabin

all the time. The captain of the ship always, except when duty called him out. For there he ate and lived and lodged.

Coming in suddenly, he said to the surgeon:

"I expect new orders are coming from the fleet. The admiral's barge is bearing down, under canvas, with a free sheet!"

Montrose was wondering what new orders might arrive. He had just taken from the hand of the surgeon a weak port negus, to give him more strength, when his heart was thrilled by a voice known but too well—one he would have given the world to hear under any other circumstances:

"Where is my brave Arthur—where is Captain Montrose? Thank Heaven he lives and is free once more!"

This was what he heard, and in a second more two plump arms were about his neck—two warm lips were pressed to his mouth, and Alice Dalrymple cried out:

"My Arthur—my beloved, before all the world! I could not wait the slow return of this ship to breathe out my faith and constancy! Ha—who—who is she?"

A wild shriek ringing through the cabin—a white-faced woman on her feet, reaching toward his cot, her arms extended, moaning out the words:

"He is mine—only MINE—bought with more than life!"

Vainly poor Jennie strove to reach his side; staggering, she fell, and the white deck she touched was reddened with blood pouring in a torrent from her mouth.

"Lord of mercy, she is dying!" groaned Montrose.

"Dying for you—oh, traitor, that you are!" she gasped, striving to raise upon her hands and knees.

The surgeon sprung to raise her up—he saw the glaze of death upon her staring eyes, and used to scenes of horror as he was, he turned his face away as he cried:

"She is gone! A blood-vessel from the heart, broken, ends it all for her!"

A limp form hung over his strong arm—he said, "poor girl," and laid her down upon the cot she had just left.

And Alice Dalrymple, drawn coldly back from the side of her betrothed, looked him in his pallid face and asked in a stern voice:

"What, I demand, was she to you? She called you traitor, and she died, her last look fixed on you!"

"She saved my life! But for her, this day I would have been hung, a convicted spy, in yonder accursed town!"

"Consarn your pison skin, you low-lived coward, don't you cuss our town!" cried an angry voice, and Abijah Dart, who had come off in charge of a boat-load of prisoners, rushed into the cabin and shook his clinched hand in the captain's face. "There lies one of your victims dead; you went between me and my only love on shore—why can't I kill you where you lay?"

The furious man was caught and held by two officers who sprung forward to prevent his mad attack, for the poor fellow was blind with rage.

Alice Dalrymple approached him, laid her gentle hand upon his shoulder and asked:

"Are you not the betrothed lover of the fair girl who was my kind friend in the mansion there on shore?"

"I was, till he, that accursed wretch, broke it up. Now her and me are apart forever!" groaned Abijah. "I can't stay here and look on him—I'll kill him if I do!"

He reeled out of the cabin.

"Captain Desmond, please man the barge—I am going back to the ship—to my father and my mother!"

Alice did not even look at Montrose when she thus addressed the captain of the sloop-of-war.

"Alice—oh, Alice, you will not leave me now—and in anger, too?" groaned the wretched man.

"Until I know who is true and who is false—we meet no more!" she answered, and she walked with a haughty step out of his sight.

Too feeble to rise, hot tears gushed from his eyes. He envied them the still form which lay upon the other cot.

"See Miss Dalrymple, plead with her to hear me. I can explain all!"

Thus he spoke to Desmond, who had gone out on deck and now returned.

"She has left the ship, Captain Montrose—the barge is heading for the fleet and a mile away! What shall we do with this woman's body?"

"Send it on shore, sir—that trunk of gold is hers and hers alone. Send it with her. They will know on shore, what to do with her and it!"

Tell me not one waits till after death for punishments of sin. No agony ever painted by a mad zealot's fiery tongue, could equal that which now rent the aching heart of Arthur Montrose. Death had been to him, RELIEF!

CHAPTER XXVIII.

SAM BOGGS—A SOBER MAN—HAS A FUNERAL.

"The spy has got his walkin'-papers too! I'm not alone in my mis'ry!" said Abijah Dart when he saw Alice Dalrymple come coldly out from

the cabin and enter the barge to go back to her father's ship. "He'll know what it is to see hope fade away and wait in vain for the signal of recall!"

He made no objection when asked to take the corpse of poor Jennie Boggs ashore, and the trunk of treasure she had worked long years to save, went with it.

"Sam Boggs, her husband, has always been a poor drunken sot," he said, "but on the night she fled, he took a solemn oath to never touch a drop o' pison rum again! It may kill him, he says, but he will keep his oath!"

His was the last boat between the shore and ship. When it was manned, cast off and headed in for port, the sloop-of-war was seen making sail and soon, with the white flag hauled down, she stood off from shore, heading for the fleet, where she belonged.

When Abijah landed, and people on the wharf saw what was in his boat besides the crew, the news fled as fire darts athwart a prairie.

Hundreds gathered to see all that was left of poor, misguided Jennie Boggs.

Her husband came—sober at last, his face pale, it had never looked so wan and white before.

"She loved me once—oh, how long ago, and I've loved her all the time, even when she went astray. I'll take her poor body home and give it, late though it be, a husband's piteous care!"

Willing hands aided, and the slender figure, cold and still, was laid upon a bier, and strong men took it up and with slow and solemn step and mien carried it and laid it in the little parlor which had been adorned by her own hands.

Here neighbor women assembled, and with decent care prepared the once lovely form for the rich casket purchased with her gold by Sam Boggs, who vowed no cost should be spared to show that he loved her yet.

After she was laid in her coffin, he paced the floor hour after hour where at every turn he could look upon the cold, white face.

In vain friends asked him to set a time when he would bury her.

"I'm not in haste. Sam Boggs is sober now," he said. "I want her to get used to it."

His eyes were not so red—he did not shed a tear, and he spoke in a tone he had not used for years.

"I'm afeard the poor feller is a-goin' crazy," said Deacon Doolittle. "He's been that used to strong drink that quittin' off and all at once is dang'rous."

He sent him up a little "real old stuff," he said, "smooth as talk and mild as honey." But Sam sent it back untouched, and said he was no baby to go back on his oath—he'd keep it, or die.

Watchers wanted to stay by the body that night. He would not listen to it. He was watcher enough. He couldn't sleep anyway, and he would rather be alone with her now.

"They hadn't agreed very well in life," he said; "but there'd be no quarreling now."

So he was left alone. But those who passed the house at different times in the night all saw him walking to and fro with ceaseless tread up and down the room where she was laid.

Kind women sent him in some cooked breakfast in the morning.

He thanked them. He wasn't hungry yet. Didn't think he would eat till after Jane was buried.

"When would that be?"

He had not decided. "Some time between then and the day of judgment."

Surely he was crazy. Doctors were asked for advice. The deacon was appealed to.

What could he do? The man was really and truly sober—the first time in years; but he was no doubt sober. He did not rave. He used no "cuss words." He abused nobody—he did not even recall the failings of his dead wife.

He dressed in the best suit he had. He seemed to be getting ready to have a funeral. He went into her garden and picked every flower blooming there.

He strewed them over her coffin. He brought every chair in the house and arranged them in order around the room, as if for those who would attend the service for the dead.

"Gettin' ready, Sam—my poor boy—gettin' ready!" said the deacon, kindly. "What time shall we all come around?"

"At sunset, deacon—I'll be ready then!" was the quiet answer.

"It's wonderful, how the creetur' bears up!" said the deacon. "Wonderful!"

The news was passed, that at sunset, by Sam's request, the funeral services would be held.

Late in the afternoon Sam was seen to go out. When he came back with a great demijohn supposed to contain wine or liquor, no one was surprised.

In those days, wine and ardent spirits were offered to visitors at funerals as freely as it was at weddings. No one deemed it wrong, because custom made it seem right.

It was almost sunset. People began to gather near the house. But the doors were yet unopened. Sam had closed every one. Even his window curtains were close drawn. Curtains only—shutters were unknown at that date.

Latticed blinds only in some mansion of very great pretensions were seen.

"What does the poor creetur' mean? He is awful still in there!" the deacon said.

"Yes," said Long Tom Dart—"he takes it hard, for one that has lived with her a cat-and-dog life so long!"

The last rays of the setting sun robed land and sea in shades of crimson and of gold. The people in hundreds had gathered around the house.

Suddenly—almost like the lightning-flashes of a sudden thunder-storm—a sharp crackling sound was heard—smoke and flame burst up in a fearful volume all over the house, and as the flames swept the curtains up with their hot tongues, Sam Boggs was seen seated by the head of his wife's coffin, her trunk of gold at his feet, the flames all over him and sweeping through the room swift and terrible.

Saturated with the spirits he had brought, everything caught in a second, and no human hands could do a thing to save him from the fearful doom he had arranged with a maniac's dreadful precaution.

Every door was barred, and before those who strove to burst in had scarcely struck a blow all were in a blaze of fire.

All that could be done was to save the houses near at hand.

The last seen of poor Sam he was bending over her dead face, looking on her closed eyes, and never flinching though the agonies of a terrible death were upon him.

It was horrible. Sick at heart the people looked, and words of pity went up with the clouds of ebon smoke, the spires of blood-red flame.

Lingering around, when the house was but a bed of fiery coals, when no sign of the dead was left in sight, the people stood and talked in the red light of the glowing coals.

"There comes your 'Bijah up the street tearin' along as if he too was mad!" cried the deacon to Long Tom Dart as they turned away from the funeral pile.

"Whatever is the matter, 'Bije!'" shouted the latter, as his son, bareheaded, wild in expression, rushed toward him and the deacon.

"News from that cussed spy!" he yelled. "News from Montrose, the British spy!"

CHAPTER XXIX.

A NEW PRIVATEER—THE REMORSE TO TAKE THE SEA.

"News from Montrose—what news, 'Bije? Is the murderer's cuss dead?"

"No—daddy, no!" answered the son of Long Tom Dart. "The news is better than that. He has gone stark, stavin' mad! He jumped overboard when they took him to his frigate, and when they picked him up they had to tie him down, head and foot, or he'd have done it again!"

"How did ye hear? Are ye sure it's true?"

"Yes—Eph Norcross, the fisherman, got leave to sell fish out there under the flag. And he was out an' alongside and saw it with his own eyes! But what's up here—where's the Boggs house gone?"

"Burned to the ground, 'Bije, with Sam and his dead wife in it. He set it afire himself, the poor crazy creetur'!"

"Sakes alive. Who'd ha' thought he had the pluck? Well, he is better off, and she too. It's all over for them! For me—I believe I'll go mad too. I shall sure if I stay here! Daddy—let me go to Portland and fit out that ship you took—the Agnes, for a privateer. I can get a crew here and in Beverly to go right along. She mounts twelve guns now—I'll get two long thirty-twos from the forts if they have 'em to spare up there, and fit 'em on circles like you've got old Ebenezer. If I don't do that or some thin' like it and getaway from here, I'll go mad, I know I shall!"

"By smoke—'Bijah, 'tis a good idea. You're a good sailor, that ship will want but little fitting out and we'll help you. And I'll carry you and your men up in the old Terror, for I'll have little to do around here now. The British will not trouble Salem any more. I'll help to fit you out and we'll cruise together—run down to 'ards the Chesapeake and Hatteras and bother the enemy in new latitudes!"

The captain, the old deacon and Abijah had walked down the street and were soon opposite the Doolittle mansion.

"Come in—come in, both of ye!" said the deacon kindly.

"No!" said Abijah, sadly. "There's one there I would die to serve, but till she bids me come I can never darken door of yours!"

He went on down the street, and taking a boat went off to the Terror, to talk with his brother over his new plans.

"What'll you call your new craft if you fit her out?" asked Elnathan.

"Remorse," said Abijah, "and when Sally Ann hears how I fight she'll know what it means. I have nothing to live for if I lose her."

It was decided before the brothers slept that night that Elnathan should go second in command of the Remorse, and they would use all their prize-money in putting in arms and making their ship efficient.

They had noticed she was sharp-built and of fine model, and when not thrown out of trim by too much cargo, she would be fast.

Salem was full of news and rumors now. The details of the flight of Montrose and Jennie Boggs were discussed everywhere. The chaise and horse had been traced and found in the care of crippled Sandy Grant, who mourned the loss of his boat though he had received twenty times her worth in gold.

He mourned most when he knew a "Britisher" had sailed her from the coast. For through them he had lost his boy, and he vowed he never would forgive them while he lived.

When it was known a new privateer was to be fitted out and armed, to be commanded by Long Tom's oldest and favorite son, there was a rush of volunteers, for, as one man said, "Luck went with the Darts all the time."

There was scarce standing room left on the sloop, above or below, when the Terror sailed the next day for Portland Bay to carry 'Bijah and his crew.

Men and good men enough to fill out a full crew for the new ship went along.

Arms they expected to get from the Government forts and arsenals, and the letter of marque was applied for to be in readiness as soon as the ship was fit to go to sea.

Salem seemed a lonesome place after the Terror sailed. The young and middle-aged men of the town were almost all gone, leaving but enough to man the batteries and police the place.

The old deacon, gloomier than he had been for years, walked from the council-room to his home with his head bowed forward, his eyes on the ground, his form bent as if the weight of years, instead of care, was on it.

"Where's Sally?" he asked his good wife, when he went into his house.

"Can't tell, deacon—in her chamber maybe. She is never around, chipper and smart as she used to be. I haven't seen her smile since the night her and 'Bijah had their fuss!"

"Wal, 'Bijah has gone off, desperate and unhappy. Shouldn't wonder in the least now to hear of his being killed any day. He said to me and old Tom, life without Sally's love was not worth liftin' a hand to save!"

"How dared he say I didn't love him! He knows I do! 'Twas his own fault. I told him what I did, when he made even my own father doubt my truth!"

It was Sally Ann herself who spoke. Sitting in the deep embrasure of an old-time bay-window, with the curtains dropped before her, her mother did not know she was there.

"If you'd said as much to him afore he sailed, Sally, I don't believe he would have gone away."

"Sailed—father! Where has he gone?"

"To Portland Bay, with a full crew, to fit out and command a privateer. He sailed two hours ago. He is to refit the Agnes, the transport ship the Terror took, and he'll call her the Remorse. A funny name, isn't it?"

"Not for those who grieve about the past, father. How long does it take to make the voyage to Portland?"

"A couple of days with a fair wind."

"And a journey by land would take longer?"

"Yes—a week, I calc'late—why do you ask?"

"I was thinking how long 'twould take to hear from Portland when they sailed. Father, have you got some money you can spare? I want to do some trading. Winter will come on by and by, and I need new clothes."

"Sart'in, child. Go to my strong box—there's the key. Take all you want, my dear, and try to cheer up a bit. The house seems awful dull when we don't hear you laugh."

"I'll try to be cheerful, father—but it's hard work now."

CHAPTER XXX.

THE ADMIRAL'S DAUGHTER AND THE MAD CAPTAIN.

WHEN the barge returned to the Thunderer, the admiral met his daughter at his cabin door just as she was about to enter there.

"Alice—where is Montrose? Did they not send him as Captain Dart promised?"

"When Captain Dart reached Salem Montrose was not there. He had won the love of the fair young wife of another man, and had persuaded her to aid him to escape and to keep him company in his flight."

"Alice—my child, are you sure this is true?"

"As sure as that I stand before you now. I have seen them both. They two put to sea in an old and leaky boat. They nearly perished there. Perhaps it would have been better for both if they had. Life and shame would have gone at once. Almost exhausted, drifting helpless, they were picked up by a boat from the Corinne and taken on board."

"There I found them—both helpless on the surgeon's hands. Not knowing his treachery, I sprung to the side of Arthur with burning kisses and loving words on my lips. The woman whose love he had won heard what I said, sprung convulsively from her bed to claim him as her own, burst an artery and fell dying at his feet."

"Scarce had this dread scare occurred when

Abijah Dart, the old captain's son, charged him to his face with going between him and *his* love, that fair young girl you have so often spoken of. And coward that he was, and false as cruel, he mutely bore the charge. Do you wonder then, that I, your child, a scion of a noble race, should turn in haughty scorn and leave him there beside the victim of his treachery? I will see him nevermore. Send me back to England, just as soon as there is a ship bound home."

"I will, my child—I will. This is no place for women at the best. This is to be no trifling war. These Yankees fight like tigers in their native jungles. Go to your mother and sister. I will see Montrose when the Corinne returns. He has a father's righteous wrath to fear!"

Alice went in, and the old admiral paced the quarter-deck until he saw the Corinne return and cast her anchor near the frigate Galatea.

A barge from the frigate, already officered and manned, pulled on the instant toward the sloop-of-war and was alongside before a sail was furled.

It was the captain's barge, sent to carry their released commander to his ship.

"Man my barge! I will see Montrose in his own cabin!" said the admiral, in haste.

Both boats were speeding over the ruffled water, the frigate's boat being the nearest to her ship.

The commodore had not permitted his pennant to be raised in his boat.

This was a private visit. He went to confront Montrose as a father and a man—not as an admiral of the fleet.

The first boat was close to the gangway of the frigate. The ladder was over the side, the man-ropes held by the tidy boys—the officers and guard above ready to receive their loved captain with every honor due his rank and station.

Suddenly, with an appalling shriek, Montrose, who had been leaning faintly on the surgeon's shoulder, for the latter came with him from the sloop-of-war, rose and leaped wildly into the sea.

Grasped as he rose to the surface of the water, he raved and implored his men to let him go. Struggling fiercely, it was all they could do to get him in the boat, and when the admiral came up his fearful shrieks did not cease.

"Montrose—do you know me?" asked the old officer, who had been his lifelong friend.

"Yes, tyrant—yes, you reign below! I will not endure your fires—hence, hence, I defy you all! Devils, let me go!"

"Mad—poor fellow, mad as a man can be! Get him on board and keep him from doing harm to himself!" cried the admiral.

They had to bind him hand and foot to get him up the side and on board the frigate.

There the admiral tried to so soothe him down as to draw him back to reason by kind talk. It was in vain. He recognized no one on board. Exhausted, he was not so violent, but it was evident he must be kept under constant watch and restraint.

"May not this malady have been coming on for a long time and been hastened by his wounds and confinement?" asked the admiral, addressing both the surgeons there.

"Possibly yes!" was the answer. It was the only comfort the good admiral had, to think the man in whom he had reposed so much trust had erred through madness, rather than from cold intent.

When he returned to his ship, he told his family of the sad state in which he had found Montrose.

Strange—but the one who expressed the least sympathy was Alice. Thus it ever is. Let a woman believe her love is slighted, the change from love to hate is quick as the gathering of a summer storm. Pity it were not also like it, quick to pass away.

Obliged by service rules to order an official examination by a board of surgeons and to fill the place of the insane captain in his command, the admiral had sad duties to perform.

Two transports, with stores much needed by the fleet, which had greatly missed those captured by the Terror, now arrived, and for a couple of days the crews were busy in taking out and receiving the supplies.

The transports, two large ships, well manned and armed, were to return to England by the way of Canada, taking in cargo in the St. Lawrence for home.

In one ship the admiral decided to send his family and their servants. The other was to carry home the invalids from the fleet, officers and men, and among these, Captain Montrose was included.

Though undoubtedly insane, he was no longer violent. A settled melancholy took complete control, and hour after hour he would pace to and fro, watched by his attendants—murmuring but two words:

"Poor girl! Poor girl!"

A week passed in getting the cargoes out and preparing the transports for return, and then sadly parting from his loved ones the admiral saw them spread their canvas to the breeze and stand away to the northward up the coast—their

orders to keep well out till off Canadian waters so as to avoid all danger from the American ports.

CHAPTER XXXI.

SALLY ANN DOOLITTLE MISSING—SIMON BLOSSOM ON THE TRAIL.

SIMON BLOSSOM, a bachelor, rich and solid in the town, was a quiet business man, who before the war had done a large trade in West India goods. He was a very quiet man, given to no extravagances or dissipations, and until the night when the council met to hear the charge of Abijah Dart, had been the least active and the most silent member in the Board.

He had got the name of "Slow and Easy" among his fellow officers, and generally he had sustained the appellation by his conduct.

But when Deacon Doolittle rushed into his store two days after the Terror had gone North, and with pallid face and quivering lips, had said in a tone of deep distress:

"Simon, my child, my Sally Ann has gone—we know not where. I fear she has turned demented and sought death in the turbid waters of the bay!"

"Great Heaven! No, it cannot be!" cried Simon, springing to his feet and dashing aside a ledger which he had been examining. "When did you miss her?"

"This morning. We waited long for her to come to breakfast, and when she did not come, wife went to call her. She was not in her chamber—the bed had not been ruffled, though she left us to go to bed at an early hour last night, kissing us both, as she always has done—though now it seems to us with more than usual tenderness."

"Hath she left no sign—no clew to where she meant to go, or what intent she had?"

"Only this." The deacon handed Simon a slip of paper on which these words were written:

"Do not grieve that I have gone—I am so unhappy now! Heaven bless and guard you both."

"Poor, dear child. She must be crazed. No better home had the best and sweetest girl in all our town. Deacon—she was the only one I ever saw that my *heart* went forth to meet—but I dared not show her what I felt, for I knew she loved another. What can I do to help you now. My heart bleeds for your distress, and it is full of sad foreboding. Have you searched the town, made inquiry along the water-side?"

"Yes—I have sent servants and friends everywhere. I have been astir every second since we missed her."

"Hath she acted strange of late—since—since the night when she was before us in the council?"

"No. But two days since she got from me fifty pounds in gold and silver to buy cloths for winter making up. She seemed to have settled down with a more quiet mind since she heard that Abijah had gone away."

"Hath she used the money in purchases around the town?"

"No—not in a single case, so far as I can hear."

"Are any of her clothes missing?"

"Only a strong suit—warm and neat, such as she wears on stormy days if she goes out to visit the sick and needy!"

"Was she much startled when she heard Abijah had gone?"

"Yes—she asked how long it would take for his voyage. What time it took to hear from Portland, too, by land! I answered her, and though nervous at first, she soon was calm again!"

"Deacon—do not fret. I do not think that she has destroyed her life. Be patient. Trust in *Him* whom we know to be all-powerful. I think I can find Sally Ann. I shall try. Keep this to yourself, for if I leave town for a little while, I wish no talk about it!"

"Oh, Simon—*Simon*, you are the first to give me hope!"

"Be quiet, deacon. I am not given to many words or much active demonstration. Keep your own counsel and say to no one that you know I am going away upon a journey. I hope I am right in my conjectures. If I am these clouds will pass away. I think the girl has taken an unwise step, but one that will bring no discredit on her name. If I find her—chide her not when she returns!"

"Simon Blossom, I am nigh onto three-score and ten in years, yet never hath child of mine heard a harsh word from my lips. Love hath ruled my household. Bring her back and on bended knees I'll thank my merciful God and you!"

"I hope I may prosper in my quest. Leave me now—I must arrange to leave my business to my clerks, while I tell them I take a trip of recreation to the mountains."

The deacon left the store of his friend with a lighter heart and a quicker step than when he entered.

Simon turned the covers of his ledger together and put the book away. Calling to an office-boy, he said:

"Go to the stables of Amos Scrabble and tell him I want a strong, able horse to ride on a journey. And then to my lodgings and pack in

the old saddle-bags that hang in the hall an extra change of linen and bring them here. I am tired of work and feel the need of a little recreation!"

Within an hour, sitting erect as an old-time cavalier in his saddle, Simon Blossom, mounted on a strong, fair-gaited horse, set out from Salem, taking a road that led northward. It was the same, though he did not know it then, over which poor Jennie Boggs had galloped on her way to a sad and sudden death.

It was noon, and dinner-time, when he left the town. He had not waited to dine, but when he stopped for a bit of bread and cheese and a pot of beer at a wayside inn, some miles from town, he asked if many travelers went that way. And when told that few people were on the road since war had made the times so hard, he made inquiry further.

Had a comely woman, young, fair, of dark complexion, with ringlets of soft brown hair, almost the hue of gold, gone by?

The landlord said no, laughed, and asked him if he was chasing a daughter or a wife, that he asked with a description so minute.

This nettled Simon hugely, and he paid his bill and rode on, determined thenceforward to be more cautious in his questions and to cover his inquiry by the cloak of ordinary talk on weather, crops, and how the war went on.

For he had a sensitive nature, old bachelor though he was, and ridicule was hard for him to bear.

That night he stopped at an inn ten leagues from Salem. It was kept by an aged widow who had two sons serving their country in the frigate Chesapeake, then fitting out for sea in Boston and waiting a chance to carry the Stars and Stripes out upon the ocean and to meet the foes who sought to crush the Republic in its infancy.

Here he made guarded inquiries about travelers, but he found no trace of the one he sought. It was evident now, he believed, that Sally Ann had fled from home to go to her lover—her mind changed, as reason came to her aid in regard to the justice of her treatment in his case.

Disappointed, but not disheartened, he mounted early next morning and rode on again, not relinquishing his object, because he did not strike a clew in the outset.

CHAPTER XXXII.

OFF TO SEA—THE TERROR AND REMORSE—A NEW RECRUIT FOR 'BIJAH.'

It was a busy time at Portland after the "Terror" arrived and the "Agnes" was secured from the prize commissioners to be fitted out as the privateer "REMORSE," for by that strange name Abijah Dart insisted she should now be known.

All the new recruits, many patriotic men from Portland, and the officers and crew of the Terror, joined in the work of preparing the ship for service. She already carried twelve twenty-four-pound carronades, good and sufficient guns for short range, and Abijah had but little trouble in getting four long twenty-fours for an addition to his broadside battery, and two long thirty-twos to mount on circles or pivots—one forward, the other aft, to use as bow and stern "chasers."

This armament was all that she had the hull to bear, and when water and provisions for fifty men for three months, ammunition and stores were in she was in good trim for sailing and as deep-loaded as she ought to be to work well.

So rapidly and willingly did all hands work that but four days elapsed from the day they took the ship in hand, before she was not only ready for sea, but ready to fight her way with almost anything of her tonnage outside.

With her colors set, her crew aboard, her commission in Abijah Dart's pocket, there was nothing left to retain her in port an hour longer.

The Terror, with the understanding that a cruise off the coast should be taken in company, lay at short scope of cable in the harbor near at hand, ready to sail.

"All right—nothin' wantin' Elnathan?" asked Captain Abijah Dart, as the ship lay with single lines forward and aft at the pier where she had fitted out.

"Nothin', 'Bijah, as I know of—below or aloft. I calc'late we're fixed about as slick as we can be!" was the answer. "Shall I run up the topsails and let her slide?"

"Reckon you may as well—hold on, there's a feller runnin' down the wharf—let's see what he wants."

"Is your ship full? Can you not take another recruit?" asked the new-comer, almost breathless with haste.

He was a young man—little more than a boy—rather coarsely dressed, slender in form, but seemed strong and vigorous—with short, brown hair, blue eyes and a face dark as if used to wind and hard weather.

"Been to sea before?" asked Abijah.

"Yes—some—want to go now," eagerly replied the new-comer, who carried a clothes-bag in his hand.

"Can you box the compass and tie a reef-knot—steer a trick at the helm and stand an anchor watch without goin' to sleep?"

"I reckon so—just try me," was the answer.

"We're all full—both watches set, but the steward I shipped for the cabin hasn't come off yet, and I'm not goin' to wait for him. Take his berth, if you want to, for this cruise, and for longer if we agree."

The new-comer tossed his clothes-bag on board and jumped over the bulwarks after it, and stood panting from his run while the lines were cast off, sail made, and the ship headed down the bay.

"Put his name on the muster-roll, Elnathan—I'll look to the ship till we get outside," said Abijah to his brother, as the ship moved out from the wharf and the last man on board stood waiting for orders.

"What's yer name?" asked Elnathan, as the last recruit waited to be enrolled.

"Willie Wild," was the answer, in a low tone.

"American born?"

"Yes, sir. American all over."

"Keerect! You'll find a berth in the pantry and all the work you want to do, takin' care o' stores, sarvin' 'em out and seein' the cooks stand up to duty. So heave ahead, Willie Wild, and good luck to ye."

"Thank you, sir—I'll do my best."

And the new steward went below to look up his berth and commence his duties.

The ship was now a cable's length from the wharf, under her three topsails, jibs and spanker, heading off in the wake of the Terror, which under all sail stood for sea.

"Bijah—there's some one else on the wharf a-wavin' an' a-shoutin' an' a-lookin' this way!" said Elnathan, as he came on deck and looked toward the pier the ship had just left.

"Yes—I saw him a-trottin' down a-hossback, but I don't keer—he's too late if he does want to jine! I wouldn't wait for my gran'father now that we're fairly off!"

"He looks like Simon Blossom, Bije! If I didn't know he was back in Salem sellin' lasses, rum an' coffee, I'd swear 'twas him!"

"Don't keer—if 'twas. We're off, and you don't catch me a-shortenin' in sail till we head for port again with a prize in tow!"

So the ship stood on out of the harbor, leaving a stout, red-faced man on the pier, almost frantic with rage, because his signals had been unheeded.

This man was covered with the mud and dust of travel, his horse looked gaunt and tired, he seemed as if himself well tired and worn down with a hard journey.

"Was that ship the Agnes—'Bijah Dart the captain?" he asked of a citizen, who stood smoking a pipe on the pier.

"'Twas 'Bijah Dart's ship—they call her the *Remorse*, now!"

"Was she full-handed?"

"Must have been, or he wouldn't sail. They took one chap on, though, just as they were a-castin' off—a young feller that wouldn't take no for an answer—*would* go, whether or no!"

"Not very tall, young, short brown hair, blue eyes—clothes too big for him—loose all over?"

"Reckon that's about the pictur! Jest such a chap was last aboard—had to *jump* to git there, for the ship was cast loose when he asked if he could ship. They took *him* in place of a steward who didn't show up!"

"Too late! *Too late!*" groaned the man, turning to his jaded horse. "A half-hour more of time and I'd have gained all I came for! Where is the nearest tavern? I am used up, and so is my horse!"

CHAPTER XXXIII.

A FEARFUL BATTLE—'BIJAH TAKES A LESSON IN WAR.

The *Remorse*, as she drew out from the pier and felt her canvas, moved swiftly down the bay, close in the wake of the Terror. The sloop, fully manned, her great brass guns shining on her deck, swept off upon the wind with wonderful speed, and to keep near her, top-gallant and royals had to be set on the ship.

The sun was low in the western sky, when, the dark rocks of Cape Elizabeth astern, the ship and sloop, almost side by side, shortened sail and headed eastward for the night.

It had been agreed before they sailed, between both captains—father and son—to cruise in company for a while, so that the new ship and crew would have the discipline and prestige of the sloop with her, in service, if it came before her own crew had got their vessel and her batteries well in hand.

The men had been assigned to stations, it is true—each gun had its crew, but it takes time to fit men for brave work, and the longer they have served the better do they know their duty.

"We'll make haste slowly, 'Bije," said the old captain, as they stood off, under scant canvas. "I'd rather be a week *drillin'* and gettin' a crew so they know how to use their guns than to meet an enemy we couldn't handle for want o' practice!"

The principle was good, and the next three days, just off the coast, in sight of land most of the time, the crews of both vessels were kept at sharp exercise with great guns and small-arms. The sail-trimmers too were taught their duties

and learned to handle their ship in all needed movements—tacking, wearing, making and taking in sail.

"Dad, don't you think we've been playin' war 'bout long enough to have a little o' the *real* thing? The boys are gittin' sick o' so much fuss and no puddin' in sight!"

This was what Abijah Dart said on the morning of the fourth day out of port, when the sloop ranged up within easy tacking distance on the lee quarter of the ship.

"Maybe they'll get *work* instead o' play afore long!" said Long Tom, quietly. "Keep 'em to exercise and harden 'em to it. They'll thank ye, by and by."

"Sail ho!" shouted a man—the lookout on the ship's fore-to-gallant yard.

"Whereaway, and what is she?" shouted Abijah Dart.

"Two square-riggers, broad on our starboard beam, heading to the north! They'll cross our bows if we lay as we are!"

The answer came short and sure—an old sailor was aloft.

"Good—we'll lay as we are till we know what *they* are!" said Long Tom, speaking for both, for he was ranking officer there, both by age and experience.

The *Remorse*, at the time, close hauled, under her three topsails, jib and spanker, headed nearly east, making but little way, for the breeze was light. The sloop, under jib and mainsail, bulged lazily along just under her lee—the crew lounging about decks waiting for orders to turn to for drill.

But the instant the cry "sail ho" reached their ears, every man on both vessels seemed to wake right up—alert and active, they looked to their arms, seeming to feel that any vessel they saw or overhauled must be an enemy.

Nearly an hour went by. The strange vessels in close company, in the light wind, made slow headway, though it blew so near astern they came on with squared yards.

They did not change their course when, hull up, they must have sighted sloop and ship, and as the latter forged gently ahead, the courses were such that they would cross nearly together.

They were yet some three miles or more apart, when the sloop and ship showed their colors. The instant the Stars and Stripes went up, the vessels to the southward changed their course.

They hauled up more to the eastward, and now their rig could be seen. Before, coming head on, it was not possible to discover whether they were brigs, barques or ships.

They were of the latter class, evidently armed, but not so well manned or managed as regular men-of-war.

Long Tom eyed them keenly as the English flag was seen fluttering at their gaffs, and remarked:

"They're transports, 'Bije! Bound home in ballast, too, I reckon—not worth much—is't worth our while to waste powder on game like that?"

"They'll do to practice on, dad! They carry guns and quite a crowd o' men!"

"I know it, 'Bije, and no cargoes now. And there's the hitch. If they *fight*, we'll lose some men most like and have to knock the ships all to pieces to take 'em. And the ships and a lot o' prisoners to feed is all we can make anyway. Will it *pay*? That's the question."

"It seems pesky cowardly, dad, to see 'em flaunt that rag o' theirs right in our faces and go on as if the sea belonged to them alone. I'd like to bother 'em a *little* anyway! It'll be fun to see 'em pile on the cotton to git away!"

"Do as you like, 'Bije. You are master of your own ship, lad. Have your *fun*, if you want to, and we, old hands in service, will look on!"

"Agreed—dad! Agreed! All hands to quarters and clear for action! To your guns, lads! Topmen aloft and loose to'gallant and royals—loose and sheet home fore and mainsail!"

Instantly the crew of the *Remorse* were at work, and as she crowded on canvas and forged rapidly ahead, her gunners at quarters ran out the broadside guns and shotted the pivot-guns ready for action.

Old Tom in his sloop stood on not far astern of the *Remorse*, but he did not call his men to quarters or act as if he intended to take any part in the action if one began.

Heading his ship so as to run between the two Englishmen if they had less speed than he, Abijah Dart stood out with all his drawing canvas set and soon saw that he had the "heels" of the enemy—in other words, that he closed with them rapidly. At first they crowded sail, to avoid him—but when they saw he gained, boldly and like British sailors they prepared for defense.

Taking in their lightest sail, standing on side by side, with their guns run out and manned, it could be seen they would fight hard in their own defense.

"'Bijah is foolish—but the boy will learn a lesson," growled Long Tom, as his son shot ahead in his handsome ship, already a mile in advance of the sloop. "He'll lose more than he'll gain if he takes both ships, for there's

nothin' in 'em but wood and iron. There goes his first warnin'!"

A single gun—one of the long thirty-twos—from the *Remorse* sent a shot just under the bows of the leading English ship. It was an intimation if she did not heave to, the next would fly closer. The Englishman understood it, and also made his dissent manifest a second later. His ship was almost broadside on, and trying his range with an after gun he found it only a trifle short, for his shot struck not half a cable's length away from the *Remorse*, and in good line.

Changing their course, the two ships now hauled up still more, so as to head in line right across the bows of the *Remorse* as she came up—thinking to rake her from all their batteries if she held her course.

Abijah saw this none too soon, for as he laid the *Remorse* broadside to broadside, he was within long gun-shot of both. And rapidly they went to firing as if they meant to get him out of the way before the sloop could come up to join the combat.

Hit in several places, some of his men down, the blood of Abijah Dart boiled. His old wound was not yet healed, but his right arm was strong and his heart full of fire.

With broadside and pivots also he returned the fire, and forging ahead, as he saw he was doing damage with his guns, he sought to get them where he could try a raking game, or else get between the ships, as he had at first meant to do, and settle the fight in a hurry.

To his wonder, both ships having combined action by an exchange of signals, wore short around, and crowding sail steered right down upon him, aiming either to crush by a joint fire, or to close and try to carry him by boarding.

It was now that Long Tom Dart realized that Abijah had a bigger contract on his hands than he wanted—in short, that he would need *help*, and the big gaff topsail and the flying jib went up on his sloop in a hurry as he headed for the three ships now closing in, and every one pouring in a hot and deadly fire.

All enveloped in a cloud of smoke he could hardly see which was his son's ship as he steered right where the crashing fire was hottest, not daring to use his guns lest he should strike the wrong ship.

On—on he swept, until within almost a pistol-shot, and then he saw the fight was hand to hand—the *Remorse* lay yard-arm and yard-arm between the two other ships, and both crews seemed to have sprung on board *en masse* to carry her.

Steering his craft right for the nearest of the enemy, he shouted to his men to stand to arms and be ready to save 'Bijah or share his fate.

He called out to some men to stand by to lash the sloop fast when he struck the hull of the Englishman, and snatching up a trumpet from the binnacle, yelled with a voice of thunder:

"Hang to 'em, 'Bije! Hang to 'em, boy! Long Tom Dart is coming!"

CHAPTER XXXIV.

HAND TO HAND—A CLOSE CALL FOR 'BIJAH—THE MAD CAPTAIN'S WORK.

A SECOND later, with a crash that threatened destruction to both, the vessels came in contact, and Long Tom, sword in hand, dashed across the British deck to reach the spot where his son, almost overwhelmed, was falling back foot by foot on his quarter-deck, with the entire force of English fighting-men upon him and the few who were left of his heroic crew.

Elnathan was down—wounded or dead, old Tom saw that, and that Abijah fought hand to hand with an officer in naval uniform, and shouting to his men to follow, he dashed in on the rear of the enemy, and cutting down all before him, strove to reach his gallant son.

He saw Abijah stagger, fall, and the sword of his opponent seemed poised above his heart, when, with a wild shriek, a light-haired boy sprung before the fallen man, dashed the blade aside, and covered Abijah's form with his own, as he fell, wounded, to his knees.

"Back! Back, accursed spy!" shrieked this young hero, his voice shrill as a bugle-note, and the officer, who had seemed to lead the wild conflict, reeled as if a bullet had reached his heart, and, turning, met old Tom Dart face to face.

"The mad captain! Cut the villain down!" shouted Dart, just as a British sailor struck him a blow while off his guard that sent the old captain senseless to the deck.

"Away—away! I cannot fight while *she* is there!" shrieked mad Montrose, for it was he who led in that terrible affray.

He pointed to the form of him who had saved Abijah Dart, and with those whom he had led upon the American deck he leaped back to the ship from which he came.

"Cast off! Cast off!" he yelled—"the other ships are fired—they're doomed—they're doomed!"

How it was done it was hard to see—but the ship to port shot clear in the hot mêlée still going on and then it was seen the other English ship had taken fire.

Flames and smoke rose from her forward deck, and, shrieking, some females rushed from

the cabin, where till now they had remained unseen.

If ever a cool head was needed, it was now, and a hero rose equal to the emergency.

It was Jonathan Doolittle, who wheeled, a blood-stained sword in his hand, and shouted:

"We are fools to fight each other in the face of doom! Fight fire now, or all of us are surely lost!"

Jumping upon the burning ship he seized a deck-bucket by its rope, drew it filled with water from the sea, and leaping into the hold of the burning ship, cried:

"Follow me, if ye be men!"

Full a score or more, English and American alike, sprung at the hero-bidding to follow his example.

The wounded English captain, despairing as he saw his consort crowding sail to escape, hauled down his flag and threw it into the sea, while foes were battling side by side with his men to put out the flames which threatened all with the worst death man can face.

Meantime, out from westward sailed a small sloop, a fishing-craft, and it reached the side of the Remorse just as the disengaged ship stood northward fast as sail could drive her on. From this new arrival, a portly man leaped on the bloody deck of the American ship and rushing to where Abijah Dart had fallen, cast one wild glance on the brown-haired boy who had saved the life of his young captain, and shouted:

"Sally! I knew I'd find you, girl—I told the deacon so!"

And he lifted the bleeding form which still bent above Abijah Dart to shield his life with her own. For "Willie Wild" and the deacon's daughter were but one.

"Simon Blossom, as I live—Simon Blossom here, by smoke!" cried Long Tom Dart, staggering to his feet, rising from the deck where he had fallen, stunned by the blow which the English sailor had struck with the flat of his heavy blade.

"Yes—I'm here! Is poor 'Bijah gone at last?"

"No—but for her, the mad captain's blade had pierced my heart!" said Abijah, in a weak tone, when, lifted by his father's hand, he rose to his feet and looked at a face which, stained almost nut-brown, still showed blushes as trembling poor Sally stood, her sex discovered by eyes more piercing than his own.

"Where—where are all my men? Is the fighting over?" cried Long Tom, as he gazed around.

"They're fighting fire, dad—the other ship is all ablaze!" said Elnathan, who was conscious, though he lay bleeding from several dreadful wounds.

"So 'tis, by smoke, and I am needed there!"

And he sprung to the work with a will that gave heart to men almost doubting they could save the ship they stood upon.

"Rig that force-pump—bear a hand, my hearties!" he cried. "Never mind that sloop, lads—every hand is needed here!"

Some of his men had sprung to cast the sloop clear of her lashings and to shove her off.

The clank of the great pump and the dash of fifty water-pails in the hands of men who worked for life had some effect at last—the hissing flames went down, the smoke grew black and thick, and soon smoldering down, the fire found its conquerors.

When they could pause and look around, Dart and Jonathan glanced aft upon a group near the ship's cabin door. The gray-haired captain of the transport, with his head held up on a woman's lap, lay dying. Two young ladies held water and wine to his white lips, which in faint tones were heard to say:

"I'm goin' sure—tell 'em at home I fought my ship while there was a man to back me. And—the admiral—he'll not hold me to blame—he'll—"

"Know you've done your duty like a hero, if we ever see him again!" cried Mrs. Dalrymple, for it was she—seeing his breath was gone and he could speak no more.

Recognizing Long Tom Dart, she rose, and as she pointed to the form she laid so gently down, she said:

"Captain, you are brave—honor him by a brave man's burial! We are once more your captives!"

"Not mine, ma'am; my son Abijah won this bloody fight. I'm not sorry for him, for I told him it wouldn't pay. Half of his crew are gone, him and Elnathan cut a'most to pieces, and he'd have gone to kingdom come sure, but for a gal friend o' yours!"

"Of ours—whom do you mean?"

"The deacon's darter—she is over there a tryin' to help the man she loves."

He pointed to the deck of the other ship.

"Let me go to help her!" cried Alice. "We can do no good here."

"We all will go!" said the mother, and a moment later, shuddering, they were among the dead and wounded on the deck where Sally Ann, aided by Simon Blossom, tried to stanch the wounds of Abijah Dart and his brother.

"The fire is out. Shall I go aboard, make sail and catch the English craft that has run away?" asked Jonathan Doolittle, as he ap-

proached the side of Long Tom Dart, who was bending over his sons. "She is almost hull down, crowding sail to the north.

"Let her go! We've had hard knocks enough a'ready—all work and no pay for it!" was the answer. "Twill take two days to get things to rights on 'Bijah's ship and his prize, and to get back to Portland, where he can refit and get his men in the hospital!"

Sad work—the dead to bury, the living hurt to care for, but it must be done. Lashed together yet, the ships and sloop in a sea scarcely ruffled by the gentle wind, the work went on.

Few were the words which fell as form after form of friend and foe, English and American, went down to their sailor graves beneath the azure sea.

The decks were at last cleared up, crews re-stationed, and the three vessels made ready to go into port.

Jonathan Doolittle was given charge of the prize, and of their own free will Mrs. Dalrymple and her daughters, with their servants, were transferred to the cabin of the Remorse, where they could aid the deacon's daughter in her heroic work of nursing those who needed so much a woman's care and tenderness.

Sally, no longer dressed in the suit which she had taken from her brother's trunk at home, but robed in a dress which Alice had provided, was but too glad to have their company there.

Abijah Dart, wounded though he was, still clung to his command, and issued orders from his cot to those whom he selected to act as officers on duty.

He told the admiral's wife he held her and her daughters not as captives, but as guests, and by the very first chance he would forward them on their homeward journey.

They were wonder-stricken when told that Montrose, though known to be a passenger on the other ship, had led the attack with daring fury, and that from his hand Abijah Dart had received every wound, and would have perished but for the appearance of Sally, whom he seemed to recognize at a glance.

For he was supposed to be helpless almost idiotic in his insanity.

They did not understand that almost ever in a case like his, urgent occasion rouses dormant energy, nor that sometimes a sudden shock calls back reason to a maddened brain.

The orders of the captain had been heard loud and clear, when the other ship cast loose, sail was made and her head turned off in flight.

He had been seen, as long as eyes followed the departing ship, leaning on his bloody sword, standing aft and gazing on the smoking ships which had been left astern.

The transport in which he sailed with many of the crew of her sister ship on board, retreating there when they saw their own ship on fire, crowded all the canvas her spars would carry as she sailed away.

CHAPTER XXXV.

MONTROSE HIMSELF AGAIN AND ON DUTY.

SUDDEN shocks in diseases of the mind as well as body, sometimes work like miracles.

From the instant when the wild face of the deacon's daughter met the glance of the maniac Montrose, who in mad fury headed the English boarders in the attack upon the Americans, with a sword he snatched from a dead officer's hand, reason began to resume its sway.

Every order he gave, when he sprung back on board the ship he had left, was so correct, officers and crew obeyed them on the instant. The true captain of the ship was down with a mortal wound, and his mates hardly knew what they had best do. They saw the flag of their consort down, they knew she was taken, and that the sloop, with fresh crew and guns not yet brought into action, would be more than they could cope with if they tried to resume the fight.

Willingly, when they found he was cool, collected, and knew just how to manage a vessel, they yielded him command, and the wondering surgeon of the ship joined in the belief that he was cured of the mad malady which had afflicted him.

Realizing the present, all was a blank to him which had occurred since he leaped from the boat on his way from the sloop-of-war Corinne to his own frigate. He knew not until told, that he had been sent home for treatment, and that the Galatea was commanded by another man.

Sadly, he accepted the situation, but said when the ship arrived in Canadian waters he would apply to the senior officer there, who ranked all others on the coast, for orders to return to his old ship and duty.

It was not until the next day, and then by an accidental remark, that he learned that the wife and daughters of Admiral Dalrymple had been passengers in the captured transport.

Though it did not bring back his malady, it affected him very much. He was overwhelmed with grief, and vowed that he would not rest when he had gained an armed command, until he had rescued them and had either restored them in safety to the admiral, or placed them in an English vessel homeward bound.

He would have hove about in the transport and gone back to make the attempt then, but he

had reason enough to think it would be folly to try it. He knew well that the armed sloop, under Long Tom Dart, was in herself more than a match for the ship he was in—that choosing her distance at long range she could tear the vessel to pieces while he went unharmed.

So, crowding sail all the ship could bear, he stood on for Halifax, the nearest point where he expected to find British men-of-war and an officer of sufficient authority to countermand the order by which he was then on his way to England.

He grew stronger in body and mind as the ship sailed on, taking comfort in the thought that restored to health and duty he might render a happy service to the maiden of his love and to her family.

For in all the positions where he had appeared to be false to Alice Dalrymple—he had only covered his real designs by feigning a passion he did not feel. After conversing with the old admiral about the fair Yankee girl in Salem, and asking if he could bring her off aboard his ship, he apologized to the father of his betrothed, and said he had but joked in the matter. He had made love to Sally Ann to cover the real intention of his visit to the place.

And in making love to Jennie Boggs—his only thought was to get her assistance in escaping from captivity. In fact all passion or love exhibited outside, if we may so speak, was a sham and a delusion, and terribly had he suffered for the same.

Three days and nights at sea, and on the fourth morning after the battle off Portland Bay, the transport, with Montrose on board, stood into the harbor of Halifax.

A small fleet of British men-of-war lay anchored there, and in command Montrose found a dear and valued friend, Admiral Bell.

To him he at once reported, detailing the attack of the privateers off Portland, their success in capturing one ship and his escape in the other after a hard-fought engagement.

He detailed also the capture of the family of Admiral Dalrymple and implored permission to take a ship-of-war and to go to their rescue.

He offered to waive rank and go simply as a volunteer with any officer and vessel sent—or vessels, should more than one be ordered to the service.

Admiral Bell had already heard of the sloop Terror, and her daring work under Long Tom Dart. In fact it was from a corvette, belonging to his fleet, the sloop had escaped when running down the coast after his first great exploit, the capture of the Agnes and the two brigs.

To destroy the daring privateer, or to capture her, would be a great exploit. And to recover the transport last taken, capture the Remorse, and secure the release of the captured ladies would be still better.

He had, without the latter being aware of it, several surgeons examine Captain Montrose, by entering into conversations with him and thus to test his present mental state. They all reported favorably, for excepting weakness consequent on slow recovery from wounds received in front of Salem, he seemed as well as ever, body and mind.

Taking the responsibility upon himself, the admiral ordered the sloop-of-war Plunger, and a fine fore-topsail schooner of six guns and a pivot thirty-two, upon special duty, with Arthur Montrose, C. B. and captain royal navy, in command of both.

Fitting out in haste, full-manned and officered, both vessels stood out to sea within four-and-twenty hours from the time the captain made his report to Admiral Bell.

The orders Montrose sailed under were to seek for, find and capture the vessels named wherever found and to recover the family of Admiral Dalrymple, if in the power of man to do it.

He was left to his discretion whether to try to cut them out if in port, or to wait for them at sea. He was to do his best under all circumstances and thus justify the admiral in countermanding the order that would have sent him home.

He shaped his course for the place where the battle had occurred—off Cape Elizabeth, some thirty miles at sea. But—holding that with vessels having damages to repair, a near harbor would be sought, he made up his mind the Americans would be found in Portland Bay or thereabouts.

He supposed it, like most of the accessible ports along the coast, would have batteries on shore, and dear experience had taught him Yankee batteries were not to be trifled with—that Yankee gunners could do sharp work when an enemy was under fire.

Therefore, though he ran boldly down the coast until near the latitude he sought, he studied his charts well, and, just as night was falling, ran in with the corvette and schooner between Seguin's Island and the land and dropped anchor in a fair channel, protected from a fresh gale and heavy sea that rolled in from the east.

He was within eight leagues—less than two hours' sail in such a breeze—of Portland Bay, and from there he hoped to learn if the Terror

and her consort were in that port and where they had left the prize last captured.

He ran in and anchored, with the French flag flying, for disguise. Two fishing-sloops, small open smacks, had run in out of the freshening wind and heavy sea to make a harbor, and to one of these he sent a boat manned by Frenchmen—Canadians and enlisted men—and an officer who, though English, spoke French like a native, to learn what was on the coast or down in Portland Bay, if the boat had been there.

First in French, and finding that not understood by the rough Yankee fishermen, in broken English the officer put his questions. He learned this:

Both sloops traded down at Portland—but the one they hailed was from Harpwell's Neck, the other near by at Pott's Harbor. They were owned by brothers, old men who lived by lobster-fishing, taking cod and mackerel in the season, and getting a chance to act as pilots now and then. Two boys—mere children in age—made up the crew of the sloop they ran alongside of. On the other, they were told, were a boy and girl, grandchildren of the man who owned the boat.

They knew that two privateers were in Portland Harbor—one a sloop at anchor, the other a ship in at a wharf being repaired. She had been fighting two English ships at sea and had taken one. The last was near her, at another wharf.

The fishermen knew little about these vessels—their crews did their own fishing when in port, and bought nothing from marketmen like them.

There were forts and batteries—they were out near the entrances to the bay—nothing in near the town where these vessels lay.

This was all the officer could learn, but he was told if the French vessels wanted to enter Portland Bay, either old fisherman was a good pilot, and for a fee each would act as such and show them safe anchorage.

There was an inside passage, back of the islands, running close to Fort Gorges, and islands and odd-named ledges through Broad Sound, which could be traversed, when outside a ship could not carry sail. And it seemed then as if gale was brewing which would make an outside berth uneasy, to say the least, to the most weatherly of ships.

Captain Montrose held a council with his two captains, for the object was to win what they came after with the least risk and loss that was possible. The outside entrance, guarded by a fort and two shore batteries, could not be taken if their true character was known, without fighting, and a risk of more than they could carry through.

But once inside, with his vessels and well-drilled men used to service, he could carry the American ships by a sudden dash and if he could not take them out to sea, he could destroy them.

To rescue the ladies, in his heart the main object of his wishes, he must first know where they were—on which vessel. He proposed, with one person as a companion in case of accident to himself, to go in, in one of the fishermen's boats and make the necessary discovery.

It was a fearful risk, but he had run such risks before and dared try again. The only question was whether he could trust the old man on the boat, or deceive him so that the real object of his run to town would not be suspected. There lay the greatest danger.

The night set in very dark and stormy, and nothing could suit better for concealment, if the fisherman would go.

A heavy fee was offered—gold was omnipotent, the fisherman agreed to land the two men on the outer edge of the town, wait for their return and bring them safely back, for a sum which would buy him another and a better boat if his was lost in the stormy venture.

Clad like fishermen themselves, in oiled canvas coats and sou'wester hats and great sea boots, the captain and his French-speaking lieutenant went aboard the Tiger smack two hours previous to midnight.

On the ledges outside a tremendous sea was breaking, but in where the vessels lay the water was smooth, though it almost tore the staysail from its beackets, which was all the sail the owner of the smack dared raise.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE RESCUE AND A PICTURE—A MIDNIGHT VISION.

THE storm which lashed the sea outside into wild fury was felt even in Portland's lovely land-locked bay. The Terror out at anchor three cable-lengths from shore, rolled and plunged on the snort lumpy waves and the gale shrieked through her shrouds and about her lofty masts most angrily.

The crew, glad to be where they were at anchor in a time like that, had snuggled down to sleep below, all but an anchor watch and a lookout to keep him company.

Inside the forts and batteries with no known fleet outside there was no need of keeping extra guard. Good Tom Dart had gone on shore to spend the night on 'Bijah's ship and to play a game of "checkers" with Simon Blossom, who

yet lingered with his friends—his plea rest for himself and horse, though in his good old heart he hoped when he returned that he would have fair Sally Ann for company, since he had promised her father that he would bring her back if she was found.

On the Remorse forward all was still, except where one man on watch strode to and fro under the break of the forecastle out of the biting northeast wind.

In the forward cabin Abijah and Elnathan sat propped up on cots watching Simon and their father at the game, their surgeon asleep in an easy-chair with a book upon his knee which he had read until a drowsy came upon him.

The ship lay uneasy, chafing at the pier, for the gale as old Tom said had kicked up "a *bobby* of a sea," even in the harbor's narrow scope. The gale sung overhead a seaman's lullaby, and one could feel her quiver as the spars caught the weight of the wind and shook beneath it.

In the after cabin, around a table lighted by a swinging lamp, sat four women in earnest converse, while apart, busy with their needles, were two waiting-maids.

Three were young and pretty—the fourth was a noble-looking matron whom with the rest we have seen before.

It was midnight, but the noisy gale and the uneasy ship seemed to prevent sleepiness, and there was no sign of an intention to retire among the parties thus described.

Little thought had any one of them that in the darkness, veiled by the midnight storm the man they believed *mad* beyond all cure crouched so near that but for the wind he could have heard them talk. In through the ports which served as windows to each cabin he looked long and earnestly, and a sigh broke from his lips when he saw the quiet look of resignation to her fate which marked the lovely face of Alice—once his loving *fiancée*.

Yet there he was, trembling with excitement so that the officer who was with him was alarmed lest he should forget himself and court exposure by some hasty act or outcry.

Pressing the arm he held, the officer tried to get him to move up along the wharf, down which they had crept in stealthy silence.

It was a chilly night, yet sweat came out upon the captain's brow, and he used his handkerchief to dry it off.

"It is hard to be so near those one loves and yet dare not to speak!" he whispered. "Oh, were but our vessels near—our brave men at hand to make a dash—never will so fair a chance occur again."

The two old men deep in their game laughed as one or the other made some cunning, skillful move, and the two wounded brothers laughed too, to see how earnest both men were in the mimic battle of the checkered squares.

Suddenly between the ladies, there seemed some pleasant controversy, which those on the wharf did not understand, till Alice, a tall brunette, rose and shook out the coils of ebon hair which had been wound about her shapely head in a Grecian coil.

As it fell shimmering in raven darkness adown her back, she lifted up a tress, and far as her arm could reach was not half its length.

Urged it seemed to contrast her own soft brown hair with the ebon beauty of the other, Sally Ann drew from some pocket in her dress a single braid, most likely one sacrificed for the disguise she had to assume when she was Willie Wild, and held it up side by side with that of Alice.

And Emma, at the instant raised an oval mirror before the lamp and turned it to reflect her own fair face.

It was dazzling bright, and from the lamp it threw a flash out upon the pier, and Alice at the instant got one glimpse of a human face and form, and shrieked wildly as she sprung toward the open port.

"Montrose! Montrose must be dead! I saw his spirit in the darkness there—so plain—so plain!" she cried, as she pointed with trembling hand toward the wharf.

Tom Dart—Simon Blossom, both heard her cry—even the sleepy surgeon awoke, and the two first rushed to the after cabin to know what the lady had seen or heard to strike her with such sudden terror.

She told them what she fancied she had seen—but no one else had caught the flash that her eye had seen, and she was laughed at as a dreamer.

But it broke up the game forward and the ladies awoke, chilled and nervous, they scarce knew why, soon retired to the rooms where they were quartered.

Old Tom had a cot slung near where his boys slept and retired to it in a little while, while Simon, fat and round like one of the great casks he made rich profits from at home, rolled into a wide bunk on one side, and soon lost memory in the arms of "tired nature's sweet restorer—sleep."

"I cannot drive that vision from my mind!" said Alice, when kneeling side by side to pray, as she prepared to go to rest with Emma. "It was so plain. Tall and pale and sad, he leaned against some rude mast or post and pressed his

hand upon his brow, as he did when I told him I would see him nevermore! Ah, me—we will hear when we reach England, that he is dead. See if we do not, and forget not the night or hour the dread vision rose before my eyes!"

"Don't think of it, love, or to-night you'll go wild with dreadful dreams!" said Emma.

"I cannot help it," cried Alice—but she bowed her head in silent prayer, and soon all lights were out and they were still.

Yes, still, while with flying feet and beating heart Arthur Montrose and his companion were rushing back to gain their boat and get away before the light of day threw new dangers in their way.

Not a word did either speak until the ship left far behind, on the outskirts of the town, near the place where they had left the boatman waiting, they paused for breath.

"I fear our good work done is lost!" said Montrose. "The lady must have seen me—her startled look, her fearful shriek, both gave evidence of that."

"Yes, captain, yes, the flash, though not a half-second gleam, lighted up your face so that I could see the sweat glisten on your forehead like gems. Had I been forty yards away I would have known you by your sad and pallid stare!"

"If she tells what she has seen, I fear our chances to take the enemy by surprise are small!"

"She may have thought it was a vision—seen for a breath and gone. I dreaded it, when I saw the mirror lifted up. But here we are—the boat!"

The old boatman slept on his wind-swept deck, wrapped in his oiled coat impervious to damp and wind, but was soon aroused, and pushing off headed for the winding channel which led toward the distant anchorage.

He asked no questions, took no thought but that, well paid, his money was earned and his trip would soon be made.

When day dawned gray and cold, the British ships were close at hand, and Montrose felt relief as he stood once more upon a friendly deck.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

A HANDKERCHIEF—A CREST, NOT "A STRAWBERRY MARK" UPON IT.

At the long table in the forward cabin of the Remorse, covered with a smoking meal, not prepared by "Willie Wild" but superintended by the successor of W. W., seven guests were seated, while the two wounded officers in their cots had separate service.

The four ladies named in our last chapter, Simon Blossom, good Tom Dart, and the quiet, easy-going surgeon of the ship, a Portland M. D., who bore the name of Harris.

Sea Island mutton-chops, oyster *pâtes*, New England ham and baked potatoes served with cream, were almost as good as chowder, pork and beans and porpoise stew, old Tom Dart said as he glanced along the well-filled board.

The captain was in a splendid humor—so was Mrs. Dalrymple, her youngest girl, Emma, and the deacon's daughter.

It had been decided by Abijah and his father to send the three ladies—the admiral's family—on overland to Canada at their own expense, and a contract for teams was now in negotiation.

Simon Blossom was silent—a little nervous, too. He had got a *hint* that Sally Ann, who had come so far to see Abijah and make up their hasty quarrel, had almost consented to become Mrs. Dart before the ship again breasted the ocean wave. And though he had no *rights* to lose, he felt that when she became a Dart his last hope was gone—he'd be a bachelor till Death called him off.

And the other silent one, sad and thoughtful, was Alice Dalrymple. She could not shake off the vision she thought she had seen in the darkness at the midnight hour. It chilled every vein and she could not smile, much as she strove to be cheerful as the rest.

When rallied about her gloomy face, she plainly told the cause.

Abijah, from his cot, told her he should have shared her fright, since every wound which made him so weak and helpless had with it a memory of Montrose.

In vain they tried by ridicule to drive the sad fancy from her mind. It would come back, and her mother feared it would wear her down to sickness.

The captain had made inquiry from all the watch and lookout-men who had been on duty on the ship from dark to daylight, and not a sound or sight to cause alarm had been heard or seen.

"It was a mental and visual hallucination, miss—I had one once when I was a student!" said Doctor Harris, in his slow and solemn way. "I'd been in the dissect—"

"Belay—belay your jaw-tackle, doctor! I've heard you tell that *yarn* before!" called out Abijah. "Wait till the ladies are through eating before you tell that which would choke me off my feed!"

"On my word, young man—you're getting better! But the story will keep—I'll tell it at another time. Come to think, it isn't appetizing!"

And the doctor reached out and took his third slice of ham and a fourth potato.

"Hal—*luc*—nation? Is it any kin to *Sal*—*i*—*vation*, doctor?" drawled Long Tom, in about the same tone the doctor used when he spoke.

"No, Captain Dart—it is a blindness in the *mensi op*! Do you understand that?"

And the doctor looked wonderfully wise as he spread butter half an inch thick on a slice of johnny-cake.

"No, doctor—I give it up. When it comes to talking ropes and knots and compass-p'ints, I'm there every day in the year, but I've never been to college, and I'm glad!"

"Why, captain, why?"

"'Cause I'm not an *ed*icated fool! That's why, doctor. Gals, when you're through breakfast, let's go on deck and take the air!"

The captain went on deck and soon was followed by all the ladies. It was pleasant on the quarter-deck, looking over the bay, white with dancing foam-capped waves, with a rosy tinge as the red sun crept up in a hazy sky. The wind still fresh, but not heavy enough to be unpleasant, came across the water, bringing fleecy clouds in from the east, and the fisher-boats standing off to their daily work made a pretty picture.

"There comes your brother Jonathan, Sally, from the sloop. He's a good officer, if I say it to your face. Cool, gritty as sand, and as plucky as an Arctic bear. My boys are good as men are made mostly, but he is jest a *leetle* better!"

The whale-boat from the Terror, with six strong oarsmen on the thwarts came dashing over and through the waves and, standing up, the handsome lieutenant waved his cap as a salute to them all, while he handled the long steering-oar as if it was but a feather in his grasp.

Suddenly, while the boat was yet three or four lengths distant from the pier, a gust of wind whirled along the wharf and lifted a filmy white cloth, which floated off like a fluttering bird in the air, and then sunk upon the water near the course of the incoming boat.

Young Doolittle reached out his hand and picked it up. His face wore a look of strange surprise, when he glanced it over, and he barely missed landing head on instead of broadside to the ladder at the pier, so much preoccupied with the object, whatever it was.

Landing properly, under a sharp rebuke from Captain Tom for being so careless, the young officer hurried up the wharf, went on board the Remorse and hastened aft to the group on the quarter-deck.

"Jonathan, have the Portland gals got a hitch on your heart, that you don't remember how to bring a boat alongside fair and square?" asked the old captain, with a broad grin on his weather-beaten face.

"Captain Dart, something more important is on my mind than Portland girls. How do you suppose *this* came here?"

He held up a thin cambric handkerchief, lace-edged and very fine, with a name and crested coat-of-arms embroidered on a corner—a coronet over a shield with a rampant lion on its boss. It was his "find" upon the water.

"What is it? Anything more'n some gal's nose-kerchief lost by accident, or purpose, for a gay young man to pick up?"

"The handkerchief bears the name of *Arthur Montrose*—you, sir, should not forget the man or name, it seems to me!"

"No—by smoke! How did it get here?"

A cry of surprise, not unmixed with fear, broke from the lips of Alice Dalrymple as she sprung forward, seized the filmy bit of linen and looked closely at the embroidered name and crest.

"Just before the Galatea sailed from England with my father's fleet I embroidered *this* with five more, all alike," said Alice, trembling as she held up the prize. "I gave them to him as a *souvenir* at parting. I have never seen one since—how could it come here? It blew off the wharf—I saw it rise from near that great post to which the ship is fastened! By the same post the dread vision rose last night before my eyes!"

"Was it *there*? Right abreast the after-cabin port! By smoke! I'm afraid your vision was real flesh and blood! There's trouble brewin' in this latitude. Jonathan—go back aboard—we'll get under way and see if there's not some p'ison sarpints in the neighborhood!"

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

SIMON BLOSSOM HAS A NEW DUTY TO PERFORM
—PODUNK AND CLAMS AHEAD.

"SIMON—I've got a job for ye. Will you take it in hand?" asked Captain Tom Dart, turning suddenly on the old bachelor, who had looked on the handkerchief episode in silent wonder.

"To be sure I will—if it is anything I can do in reason," was the answer.

"It is to see these ladies started on their journey to Canada. 'Bijah and me have made the bargain—the teams are ready or will be when ordered up to carry them, their maids and baggage. And if you and Sally want to see

them on their road a day's journey out for company, you can as well as not. I'm goin' out to sea to look around a bit. If any British dogs-o'-war are scootin' about off this port, I'm goin' to give 'em something to bark at! And I think there is, and a *spy* is ashore, or that rag would never have been dropped where it was."

"I'll do what you want me to, Tom, and if 'Bijah is willin' will go a ways with 'em, if Sally wants to," replied Simon.

"I want no women in the way if there's another fight on hand," Long Tom said, aside, as he told Simon to hasten off with the party, while he went off in his sloop to reconnoiter out-side waters.

Mrs. Dalrymple and her daughters were only too glad to accept the plan, for once in Canada among friends a passage home would be easily procured.

The journey, with good teams, covered spring wagons and careful drivers was not dangerous, though it would be tedious.

The promise of company for the first day and night was a comfort, so an extra chaise was ordered for Simon and fair Sally Ann.

When all was arranged, and before the over-land party set out, Long Tom Dart went off to his sloop, first cautioning the officers on duty in the Remorse to keep a lookout night and day and to arrest and hold any suspicious characters who might be seen lurking around.

Then he went on board and soon his sloop was seen beating out to sea, her bright flag waving at her gaff and Long Tom at the helm happy to be off again with a hope to find work for "Ebenezer" before he dropped anchor on his return.

"Simon—don't let Sally carry you clean through to Canada!" said 'Bijah, when the ladies went to take leave of him and his brother before they started.

"No danger, 'Bijah, on *her* side. I only wish there was!" said Simon with a smile. "Do not worry, lad, I'll be as good as if she were *my* darter, instead of the deacon's. We'll be back afore the Terror is, I'll bet a goose ag'in' a gander!"

So with a warm hand-shake all around, the admiral's wife and daughters were seated in their roomy wagon, and with the servants and baggage in the rear, left Portland by the Bath road, and headed by Simon and Sally in the chaise, started on their first day's journey.

Long Tom's sloop was just standing off on its last tack to make the open sea, when the wagons started off, and soon the stanch sloop was rolling and pitching in the heavy swell that still came in, though the gale had fallen to a neat whole sail breeze.

"No ship in sight from the mast-head!" was the lookout's cry, when hailed, as they left the land.

"We'll make an offing first—then if we see nothing we'll make a run to the south and see if anything is lurkin' thereaway!" said Captain Tom. "If that mad captain has landed—the ship he came in can't be far away!"

Heading off the coast, the wind fell light as they stood out, until with Cape Elizabeth light low down the eastern board, the sloop lay almost becalmed.

"We'll have a change—'twill blow from the west by the time night falls, and fresh too!" said old Tom, with an uneasy look. "This is an uncertain coast, and gales come like the measles, when they're least needed in the family!"

A sail reported eastward broke up the old man's weather fancies.

"Take the glass and go aloft, Jonathan—your eyesight is pickle-sharp while mine is gettin' dim! See if you can diskiver somethin' worth our pickin' up. I'd like to get ahead of 'Bije a leetle, he's so stuck-up on his big ship!"

The lieutenant took the spy-glass, and soon from his lofty perch called out:

"There's half a dozen sail in sight—they're so far out I can't make out what they are, or which way they stand. They've lost the breeze too I reckon!"

"Then there's no use you stayin' up there to watch. Come down and whistle for a breath o' wind, my lad. It's dinner-time, the cook says, and my appetite feels accordin'."

For three or four hours, in a dead calm, the old sloop pitched and rolled, then out from the west came some gentle puffs to fill the sails and steady her.

"It opens easy—but 'twill howl afore another sun comes up!" said Tom, well versed in signs. "When gulls fly high and head sou'westerly for land, look out for a screamer afore it ends!"

"What'll we do about them sail off east'ard?" asked Jonathan Doolittle.

"Do? Why, lad, we'll run out and see what they are. If they are transports inward bound, we'll say how d'y'e do to some of 'em. If they're armed ships-o'-war we'll make a bow and look for other partners."

It was nearly dark when the sloop had closed near enough to see that two men-of-war and four transports standing south, formed the fleet they had seen from aloft.

"A poor show—but we *might* pick up one o' the loaded craft in the night if she lagged out o' line!" said Tom, who inspected the ships through his glass. "I calc'late we'll run little risk if we

show no light an' creep up astarn. *They'll* keep lights up to signal one another!"

So he stood on, heading so as to fall in near the line of ships some miles ahead.

And here we leave him for a little while to watch important actions elsewhere.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

A SAD SURPRISE FOR NATE AND 'BIJAH.

CAPTAIN MONTROSE took a little time for refreshment and rest when he got back from his midnight trip, and then called the two captains to his cabin for consultation. Not that he failed to decide on what he really meant to do, but wanting their full co-operation in his plans, he called them in to propose and discuss them, as well as to relate his discoveries in port.

"They were both surprised to hear that Montrose and his companion had passed almost to the center of a populous town on streets deserted literally before the midnight hour, had approached an armed ship moored at a wharf without being seen or hailed, and had stood for an hour where they could watch the inmates of her well lighted cabins, undiscovered—unless the accident of a gleam of light, and a woman's startled glance meant discovery.

At any rate they had come back unpursued, and had achieved all they went for—a full knowledge of the position of the enemy, as well as learning where the captive ladies were.

"What is to prevent our running down inland with boatsto-night, and with fifty or sixty men surprising, taking and carrying out to sea vessels which keep no watch as it seems!"

Thus spoke the captain of the sloop-of-war, a veteran in service too.

"It seems to me it would be easy, and done with little risk of loss. Our vessels run down to cover the prizes when brought off, and be ready to convoy them on the voyage north!" added the captain of the Pearl—the topsail schooner anchored near.

"I rejoice that your opinion coincides with mine, gentlemen," said Montrose. "I only differ in the force we would need. The ship can be surprised I think, and taken without any loss of men—her sails are all bent. To cast off, make sail and stand clear will be quick work."

"But with the sloop it will be different. Long Tom Dart, her captain, is a born fiend to fight, and if not taken utterly unawares will resist most desperately. We count, in all, one corvette and schooner. Crews of near three hundred men. We can work ship and man the batteries, if one-third are gone. Thus I say, we should take one hundred good men for the expedition."

"We can spare them here—they may be needed there!" was the response.

"Fortune favors us even with the needed change of wind!" said Montrose, toward night, when with boats lowered, men chosen and armed and all in readiness, they waited for night to cover their movements.

The boats were to move in two divisions—one for the Terror, commanded by Montrose, who chose it as the post of danger—the other by Lieutenant Fanshawe, who had been his companion the night before, and knew just where the ship was moored and how best to approach for a complete surprise.

The two old fishermen, who now knew who their employers were, influenced by both gold and fear, were to pilot them in.

The night was dark and suited even better than the night before for the work in hand. The wind, light at first, freshened after dark, and at the same time the boats started on the inland passage, the corvette and schooner under easy sail stood out from their anchorage and headed away to the southward.

It was an hour yet to midnight, but everything was still in the town, when the force halted and the lieutenant landed half his division to go with him by land to surprise the ship, while the others closed in on the Remorse by water and got on board to aid in making sail.

It was very thick—a light could be seen but a little way, yet Montrose felt sure he would find the sloop at the anchorage of the night before, and he hoped to carry her before her crew were fairly woke to danger—perhaps without giving them time to spring to arms.

Both divisions were to act as nearly together as they could—the flash of an unloaded pistol was to be the signal on the ship when Fanshawe was on board.

Nearly half an hour, more than time for Fanshawe to act, and Montrose in his boats on the bay looked for the "flash" in vain—also tried to sight the sloop at her anchorage. She was not to be seen.

All at once a sound as of a struggle, a hoarse shout and two or three pistol-shots came from the direction of the ship, and the "flash" blazed up at the same instant.

"To your oars—dash on!" came low and stern from the lips of Montrose, and his division sped out into the harbor.

But though he passed and repassed the locality where the Terror should have been, no sloop could be found.

Away on one side he ran into a fisherman at

anchor and asked of a man who sprung dazed and frightened from his bunk, where the privateer sloop was anchored.

"She went to sea afore noon to-day," was the reply—"off on a cruise ag'in after Britishers!"

So that fact learned, Montrose rowed swiftly to the pier to join Fanshawe in his work.

It was already done, and well done, and he had but time to board and put his boats in tow when the captured ship, loosed from the wharf, headed down the bay under her topsails, jib and spanker. All she needed, too, in the fresh breeze now blowing. She had been taken without loss of life, though from his cot Abijah Dart had fired twice on the first man who entered the cabin, slightly wounding him with the last shot.

"Oh, you p'ison skunk! It was you then the admiral's gal saw last night on the wharf, and she thought it was your ghost!"

This was Abijah Dart's greeting to Captain Montrose when the latter entered the cabin where Abijah lay helpless on his cot.

"Yes, it was *me!*" said Montrose—not unkindly. "Where is the lady, her mother and her sister? I would see them speedily!"

"I'm afeard you'll be *disapp'nted!* She is forty mile from here afore now!" said Abijah.

"What—gone in the Terror? *Why?*"

"I didn't say they'd gone in the Terror, and you're well posted, seems to me, to know that *she* is gone. What are you goin' to do with *my* ship?"

"You have no ship! This recaptured vessel is a prize to us, who have retaken her. Let me know where Mrs. Dalrymple and her family are if you hope for kind treatment."

"They're off for Canada, overland, to j'ine their friends and get home to England."

"When did they go?"

"Early this morning—about the time the Terror went to sea."

"You speak the truth?"

"Sart'in he does!" cried Elnathan, impatiently from the other cot. "What would be the use in our lying if we wanted to, when our ship is in your hands and we lay helpless from our wounds in bed?"

"Then my great risk is poorly paid. Only this ship and not half a crew on her as prisoners."

"There would have been crew enough to have given *you* a tussle if you had not caught us napping!" said Abijah, bitterly. "Me and my brother down—daddy and Jonathan at sea, half my men in hospital, 'most all the rest dead, and what I've got worn out, you ought to be proud o' what you've done, consarn your p'ison skin!"

"My good man—I do not wonder you are annoyed. But this is the fortune of war. You shall be treated kindly."

And Montrose left the cabin to go on deck. He found Lieutenant Fanshawe hoisting three lights—red, white and blue—for a signal. One of his paid pilots told him it was a signal always used when passing the forts and batteries at night by the men-of-war he had taken in and out—with those up, recognized as American, they would not be fired on."

This proved true and the ship passed safely by guns which could have sunk her without these lights aloft.

Abijah and Elnathan, who would rather have seen their ship sunk or burned than captured, almost went wild when they knew the forts and batteries were passed and no resistance met.

They heard the voice of the leadsmen and knew the ship was in the channel and none but a good pilot on so dark a night could take her there.

At sea—the long roll of the Atlantic waves told them when they got there—they heard their ship hailed from another vessel and soon after still another and then, without being told, they knew that men-of-war were on the coast and their boats had been sent in to capture her.

"Oh, if the Terror had not gone out they never would have got us without a fight!" groaned poor Abijah.

CHAPTER XL.

SIMON BLOSSOM AND THE LADIES TRAVEL.

It was quite an imposing cavalcade that of Mrs. Dalrymple and family, led off in style by the happy Simon Blossom, who had hired the best horse and chaise he could find in Portland, for the occasion. His happiness lay mainly in the fact that for a time he could have the honor to act as escort and protector to one who was, in his eyes, the "one fair woman," the bravest, purest, noblest of her sex—the deacon's pretty daughter.

He knew she was the betrothed of another, and he viewed her with no unholy thought—but it was a world of joy to him to hear her clear voice, to look on her fair face and peerless form.

Their teams were fresh, and made fine headway over fair roads, and the ladies enjoyed the ride and the scenery greatly.

Through groves of stately pines, close bordering the road, now up a gentle hill, then down a lengthened slope—here in sight of the distant sea, dotted with islands rich in verdure—there crossing some deep creek by bridge, rustic and

unique, but strong—there was a continual change in the panorama before them.

Pausing but once for an hour to lunch and feed, it was sunset when they reached a village of a single street which bore the classic name of Podunk, as they were informed by the portly man who kept the "Black Bear" Inn, where, as the sign informed the travelers, there was "entertainment for man and beast."

When the ladies found that one large room on the ground floor was used for parlor, sitting-room, supper-room and bar-room too, they concluded the word *women* was wisely left unpainted on the sign.

And asking to see their chambers where they would lodge for the night, one room and two beds for the four, was the best they could get without a fire, mirror, or even a basin for ablutions when they rose.

And yet Po-dunk, the accent heavy on the latter syllable, was held by its inhabitants to be almost as important as any city in the land. A daily post rode through with a mail for Bath, Bangor and other towns, and though no "Town Council" met to make laws and terrorize the lawless, there was a nightly court of inquiry held in the bar-room where national affairs were discussed by the sages of the village—its doctor, who was magistrate, justice of the peace and postmaster one and all—the landlord, blacksmith, and a barber who bled, pulled teeth and read service in the school-house Sundays.

The arrival of so many travelers at once was an event which aroused Po-dunk from one end to the other. The tavern was the center of attraction for every man, woman and child, and about a hundred hungry-looking dogs.

Simon Blossom, with his rosy face and portly form, at first supposed to be husband to the dame and father to the girl, was looked on with silent awe.

None but a man of wealth could travel in such style, and wealth was glory in Po-dunk—they saw so little of it at home.

"You've a nice healthy lot o' darters, squire!" said the doctor, wishing as first magnate of the place to be friendly.

Simon scowled. He wasn't a *squire*, neither was he a *father*. And he told the doctor so.

"Oh, they're your *nieces*, then—look smart as crickets, too, by jinks! Heard anythink new about the war? Two British ships went down the coast, close in, day 'fore yesterday. Guess they'll sop up anything they see 'long shore!"

"Is supper ready?—the ladies are hungry—so am I!" Simon said, turning bluffly to the landlord and leaving the doctor in blissful ignorance of all that he sought to know.

"Not yet. Had to send out to dig some clams and the cows got out o' pastur' to-day and can't be found, and the johnny-cake isn't done, my old woman says, and—we'll tell you when it's on the table sart'in sure. Where be you all a-goin'?"

"To Halifax, I guess!" said Simon, out of all patience with continuous hints and questions.

And he got off into a corner where the admiral's wife and daughters sat laughing with Sally Ann over his annoyances, for they could hear every word uttered in the room. Po-dunk people talked loud enough to be heard all around.

After an hour at a table the full length of the room, with all the town as witnesses and all their own party, servants and drivers, at the same board, the meal was served.

Clams were the principal dish. Clams roasted, clams fried, clams stewed, and pork and beans, made up the bill of fare, with johnny-cake and West India molasses for a relief.

Simon Blossom groaned. He liked good living—he hated clams—at home, he lived too near Beverly to look on beans as a luxury.

"I'm afraid if this is the beginning, you will be skeletons before you reach your destination!" he said, in a low tone, to his friends.

"For my part, if it was not for leaving you alone, I'd ask Sally to start back to night!"

The good lady laughed and said the hopes before them would cheer them up and make such hardships trifling in her eyes.

How Simon passed the night it would be hard to say. He was coolly told he would have to double up, two to a bed—with a driver or the landlord, or get no bed at all—for the house was full. He went out after the ladies sought their little chamber and sat in his covered chaise till the dawn of day.

He tried to eat a clam breakfast, paid the bill for all, and he and Sally, after they had said their parting words with their traveling friends, entered the chaise and turned their backs on Po-dunk—they hoped forever.

On their way back to Portland, meeting the post they heard the startling news that the *Re-morse* had been captured at her wharf and her officers and crew carried off in her as prisoners of war.

It almost broke the heart of the deacon's daughter to think that her brave lover, suffering yet from wounds, was now in hostile hands. Yet what could she do? They could not get particulars until they reached the town, and even then it was only known boats from two men-of-war, anchored near Seguin, had come down inside with a heavy force, taken the ship with scarce any alarm and got away, out-

side, before the people knew they had been near.

They had stood north, the war-ships and their prize, bound, the pilots thought, to Canada.

Sally—half-crazed, wanted to start right on overland, as if she could help them by going there, but Simon prevailed after much entreaty on her, to wait until Long Tom Dart came in to get his advice.

CHAPTER XL.

LONG TOM IN LUCK AGAIN—A PRIZE.

OLD Tom Dart was a born seaman, knew much of winds, currents, and the omens which foretold foul or fair weather. In judgment of speed and distance he had few equals. Rarely was the "log" thrown for him—a glance at the passing foam and he would say to the tenth part of a knot, how fast his vessel ran.

When he headed for the British line at dark, he had noticed the two war-ships held the lead, while two transport brigs, a barque, and a handsome ship lagged in the rear.

He carried all sail in the freshening wind, until in a couple of hours or thereabout, he was fore-reaching, or gaining on the other ships, and was less than a mile upon their weather-beam.

Showing no lights, lessening sail by lowering his gaff-topsail and taking in his flying jib, he so regulated his speed, that closing slowly in, he was almost side by side with the ship, the last in the straggling fleet.

He could see the lights of the other ships dim and faint, so far ahead, and in low tones, he told his crew that cutlass and pike, not a gun fired or pistol drawn, must take the ship.

The night was so dark, the sloop would not be seen till close aboard—the lights of the ship told just where she was.

"Jonathan—you take the tiller. I'll head the men this time!" said Long Tom, when they were so near they could hear the sailors on the ship singing forecastle songs, and men laughing over jolly yarns.

Soon, edging away, the sloop's bow was close under the quarter of the large ship, and yet so careless was the watch kept there, she was yet unseen.

"Now—luff—lay her aboard and keep her there!" said Tom Dart, as his bowsprit ran raking along the ship's black side.

"Look out—ship ahoy—you'll run into us!" cried a startled voice, just as Tom, with forty good men, bounded upon the Briton's deck.

"Guess I will—don't raise a hand or I'll cut every throat on board!" he cried, as he sprung aft upon a group of officers in uniform, but all unarmed, with such sudden fury that they stood motionless, while he, with his men, drove the crew all in one huddled mass together.

They had no time or chance to spring to arms, and seeing death in the drawn blades and sharp pikes of the daring Yankee seamen, surrendered without a shot or a single blow.

They were literally panic-stricken, for their enemies came down upon them as suddenly as if falling from the clouds.

"Put a light on a spar-buoy and drop it overboard—then follow me, Jonathan!" was all Tom Dart said after he got the ship in his power to his lieutenant on the sloop.

He had left but ten men to take care of her; the rest he had with him.

Instantly bracing the ship's yards sharp to the wind with a few of his men, while the rest stood guard, he brought her close-hauled to the west and headed for the distant rocks of Maine.

For full two hours, with his prisoners all huddled up in suspense under close guard, he stood on his new course to get well away from the other ships before he took time to ask what he had captured, or ascertain the value of his prize.

Then, tacking to the north so as to leave the convoy far in his wake before day should dawn, carrying sail till the lee bulwarks almost dipped, with the sloop hugging closeastern all the time, he took time to ask what ship he had, where she had been bound and whom she had on board.

It was the army transport *Dromedary*, bound for the fleet then near the capes of Virginia, with troops on board designed to invade the States at that point.

She carried stores, clothing, arms, ammunition and some thirty officers going out to fill up the places of invalids and to strengthen regiments in the field. A general, three colonels—two majors, and the rest subalterns, with shame upon their faces for not having struck a single blow in resistance, made up the list of prisoners, to which a crew of twenty-five seamen, a captain and two mates were added.

When day was near at hand, having tacked westward once again, Captain Dart took in all canvas on the ship and sloop except lower sails enough for steerage way.

When from aloft, hull down, their loftiest sail just seen, the English fleet was located, the wisdom of his lowering his sails was known.

Though the British men-of-war missed a vessel from their line, no sail would be in sight to show where she was. And thus he lay until not a speck of white was seen of the distant fleet from the topmost yard.

Then once more making sail, he headed in for Portland light, happy in the thought that he would show "'Bijah" what a trick he had played—how he had gained a prize and never lost a man or fired a single noisy gun.

Poor 'Bijah, tricked almost as bad, he then was sailing away from his heroic father under another flag, sad and wretched, repining over a cruel fate.

Proudly Long Tom Dart stood on the quarter-deck of his prize, when, with the Stars and Stripes flying over the English flag, he headed up Portland Bay on the second morning from her capture.

A head-wind had kept him back, and only by many a tedious tack had he made the coast so soon.

Nearing the anchorage he had left, he clewed up sails and came to anchor, while the Terror, running still further in, dropped into her old berth.

Tom had been too busy conning ship and working her in, to cast an eye ashore to look for recognition there, but now he had time to think of 'Bijah and his triumph.

He saw the wharf where the ship had been. No ship was there.

"I wonder why on earth the boy has left his berth!" he muttered. "'Twas handy to the anchorage—where has the 'tarnal critter gone?"

He looked along the other wharves for the ship in vain. He saw and recognized Simon Blossom in a boat from shore, with Sally in the stern, coming as fast as he could row to the Terror.

Then, tarrying by her side only a second, the boat was steered toward his prize.

Not till he saw Sally weeping as if her heart would break, even Simon Blossom's florid face, pale and sad, he did not think of the evil that had come upon his boy.

"Where is 'Bijah—he surely hasn't gone to sea arter me?" he shouted as they drew near.

"He has been captured! Gone—ship and all to Canada!" cried Simon, husky with emotion, while poor Sally Ann wept hysterically as if her heart would break.

Long Tom Dart for an instant bowed to the sudden blow, and a groan broke from his white lips.

"My boy—my own brave boy, in British hands again!" he cried. "Why did I go to sea and leave him helpless with not half a crew to hold his ship? Did he fight?"

"No—surprised, he was taken with scarce a blow or shot, and the vessel carried out of port before it was known in town an enemy was near. But for the pilots they forced to serve them, the whole thing had passed unknown."

"I'll soon have the boys back—Sally, do not fret. I have a prize and prisoners, too. They'll be glad to let me have my boys and men for half I hold here!"

CHAPTER XLII.

ABIJAH AND HIS BROTHER GET SPIRITUAL AID.

"'BIJAH—I'd rayther die right here than go inside a British prison!"

Elnathan Dart was speaking.

The Remorse, left in charge of a master and master's mate, with a small prize crew, was standing north, the men-of-war were out of sight to the southwest, where Montrose had made harbor to wait some tidings of the Terror, which he had sworn to capture before he returned to Halifax to report.

"Jest what I was a-thinkin', too," replied Abijah. "What can we do? They've got the arms in their own hands, our men are all broke up and have no heart to do anything. We are weak as kittens—only our cook and steward left fully free aboard."

"We've some good friends right handy here, 'Bije, if you'd only think so—friends that may help us out of this 'tarnal scrape!'"

"I'd like to see 'em, 'Nate. Where be they? What can they do?"

"You've two dozen o' the old New England rum that Simon Blossom got to make our toddy with to give us strength to git around. It is hid here in the cabin where no one but us could get it."

"Well—what o' that?" cried Abijah.

"Every bottle is worth a man or more on our side!" said Elnathan. "The chap they've put in charge is sure to git full the first chance he has. His red nose and watery eyes tell the story. The other one is no better. Let them two get a taste o' rum and they'll not stop while a drop is left to suck on!"

"By smoke, Nate—I guess you're right!"

"Then when the cat's asleep the mice will play. A few bottles for'ard will fix the men—specially if we could slide in some of our sleepin' drops—you know we've a lot on hand."

"Nate—you're a king to plan! I'll make our steward set a couple o' bottles out to try the new captin' on. If he likes it, we'll spare him and his mate all they'll pour down."

It was a simple plan, yet the only hope for those two brave men. They were scarcely able to stand, could do little by force of arms; but could they get the prize crew stupefied, they might with their own men, few as had been left on board, get the ship back and take her to some

near port where they could get help to hold her.

The steward was, like themselves, Salem-born, shrewd and trusty. Allowed full freedom on the ship, because he served the new officers as well as the old, he had a chance to make friends of his captors and to know the feelings and condition of the prisoners besides.

"How's the weather, cap'n?" Abijah asked the question of the master of the prize, when a little later the latter came down to look at a chart on the cabin table.

"A bit squally, sir— Hallo, what's this?"

He pointed to a bottle on the table, which he had not seen before.

"A little old rum, cap'n, that was kept for med'cine! We two are so weak. Take some—it's old as the hills and good!"

The officer tried a glass; it went down smooth and he took another.

"It is prime!" he said. "I'll call my mate down and give him a sip or two. 'Tis cold on deck in the blasted fog and a drop will warm him up!"

"Quick, Nate—quick—them sleepin' drops!" cried Abijah, as the new master hastily left the cabin.

Into the open bottle Elnathan poured a vial drawn from beneath his pillow, and crept back to his cot before the officer and his mate returned.

"It's good and strong, but rather bitter," the mate said, as he joined the master in a brimming glass.

"New England rum always is a leetle bitter—they haven't the sugar they use in Jamaica!" said Abijah. "Don't be afraid o' the liquor, friends—I've a leetle more left!"

The two officers did not seem to be afraid of it, for glass after glass went down until the bottle was dry.

"You'll find another on that shelf in the locker!" said Elnathan.

"You're—rob—robbin' yourselves!" stammered the master, but he reeled to the locker and got another bottle.

When he returned to the table to uncork it, his mate was asleep!

"Jim is boozy, I declare. It must be thundrin' strong—but it can't throw me. I'll take one more nip, then go on deck and stand his watch!"

He took the "nip"—a full glass at that, and his power as a wrestler with strong drink was gone. He started for the deck—made but a step or two and fell helpless to the floor.

The steward, busy in the pantry, heard the fall, came out, and, even before Abijah spoke, took in the situation.

"Take two bottles out to the English crew—wait till Nate has fixed 'em, though—take 'em out and say *their* cap'n sent 'em so they can splice the main-brace and drink his health!" cried Abijah. "Then come back quick, and, if you can find 'em, get the swords and pistols out that these two chaps had! They're in their state-room, I reclon, since they haven't got 'em on!"

The steward went forward with the rum and soon returned. The prize-crew were happy over the unexpected treat.

He found Elnathan and Abijah up, and, to his wonder, armed. The hope of freedom gave them a strength they had not dreamed they had—transient it might be, but if it lasted long enough to get their ship once more in hand, they prayed for no more.

"Tie and gag these drunken fools!" was the first order the steward got.

Secured and dragged to a state-room out of sight, the two British officers were neatly disposed of.

"Now out among our own men and have them ready as soon as the English sailors get in their grog. It is fixed, and it will fix them as well as it has their officers!"

The steward hurried forward. The prize crew were so jolly now they did not see or care what he was doing. Only a dozen good men and true had been left of the old crew, but even they were enough, for they were strong and well, to handle twenty drunken men and to work ship afterward if she was regained.

Swiftly the bottles passed from mouth to mouth, and soon the prize crew was in a state not much ahead of that in which their leaders were reposing aft.

New, posted by the steward, the two brothers crept out on deck, weak though they were, gave orders prompt, and were understood.

In less than an hour from the first conception of the plan, the entire British crew in irons, their officers helpless, were in the power of Abijah and his followers.

The ship hove about, stood down the coast, carrying all the sail her crew could set, for they could not tell what new perils might rise before them.

The brothers, stimulated by hope, had their cots brought on deck, and, aided by the best of their old faithful crew, shaped their course back for Portland Bay, hoping there, or on the sea, to find their father and his sloop.

"Dad will think we're sons worth braggin' on if we only get the old ship in!" said Abijah, when point after point was recognized which

told him where he was, for he had sailed along that coast many and many a time before.

"By smoke, yes! Won't your Sally jist squeal for joy! Hey? If dad and she are back and find that we are gone ther'll be a world o' trouble on their minds!"

"Cap'n, what's them, in there?" asked the man at the helm, pointing up a deep and narrow bay inshore.

"A ship and schooner! The cussed skunk that took us before!" cried Elnathan. "Montrose—it is, and he is making sail! They've seen us, and if we're retaken now, good-by for us all! Crowd on every rag—crowd on every rag o' sail we've got!"

"Not more than five miles away—Portland a day's sail further on, almost—slim chance now!" groaned poor Abijah.

CHAPTER XLIII.

AN OCEAN FIGHT AND THE TERROR WINS THE GAME.

TOM DART was not a man to waste time when his blood was up. The instant he knew that the Remorse had been surprised, cut out and carried off with his sons and their scanty crew on board, he began to prepare for sea—to recapture them, or secure their release by exchange.

The surgeon of the ship, who had escaped capture by sleeping on shore that night, told him the boys, though weak, were convalescing fast, so he had no fear of their death, even though they might be treated harshly.

Arranging with the military authorities in town to guard his last prize and such prisoners as he meant to leave, for the highest in rank he intended to take along, he prepared to sail for Canadian waters, where he supposed the "Remorse" had been taken with her captors in company.

He had wood, water and some stores to get on board the sloop, and this, with his other arrangements, took him all his first day in port and a part of the night.

Simon Blossom and Sally wished to go in the sloop and prayed bitterly for his consent.

"I can't hear to it!" was his reply. "I'm goin' arter 'Bijah and Elnathan hot as pepper. There'll be no foolin'! I'd fight a frigate, yes, a seventy-four-gun ship, if she stood betwixt them and me! 'Twill be no place aboard my ship for an old man like you, Simon Blossom, or a gal tender and fair as you, good Sally Ann!"

"Do you not remember I saved Abijah's life and did not shrink from fire and sword?" she asked.

"Yes, Sally, yes—I'll be the last to forget what you've done! You're brave as brave can be, but when hot iron comes crashing into my old sloop and grape an' canister may be flyin', 'twould take all my grit away to see you in danger. So—stay ashore—you and Simon—stay ashore and wait, or else go back to Salem till you hear from me! 'Twill not be long—I'll have 'Bijah and Elnathan back or me and Jonathan, too, will be a-shoutin' with the angels up above!"

Sally and Simon saw it was no use for them to plead, so at a late hour they went on shore to quarters at an inn, for Tom said he would go to sea at the dawn of day.

At the first glimpse of day, old Tom on deck, his sloop ready for her cruise, Jonathan Doolittle back with all the men from the prize he had secured to the wharf where the Remorse had laid, ordered the anchor up and the main-sail hoisted.

As the anchor broke ground, the jib was hoisted and the sloop's head veered off till, with sails full, she got steerage way.

The prisoners—the field officers taken in the prize—were in the cabin, for, as old Tom said, they were worth more to the British than his sons and their crew would be.

Suddenly, while the sloop, heading for the channel that led to sea, was just beginning to throw up spray from her sharp bows, the sound of guns far out at sea came booming in, like peals of distant thunder.

Long Tom, who had been below for an instant to give some orders to his steward about breakfast for his prisoners and himself, came rushing up the cabin ladder as the sounds fell on his ear.

"Shootin' great guns at sea? Mighty smoke—I wonder what is comin' now! Pile on the cotton, Jonathan—up flying-jib and gaff-topsail in a hurry, lad! We'll jine in, if the Stars and Stripes are flyin' where they're burnin' powder there!"

The sloop, with a leading breeze so they could head for sea without a tack, went plunging on, the short waves flying high in spray on either beam as she dashed forward on her course.

Louder and louder grew the boom of heavy guns, some quite near and others appearing further out, but not until the sloop shot clear of the point which marked the north side of the entrance to the bay, could those on board get the least idea of the battle which surely was going on.

Then—a ship with a crowd of sail, more than she ought to carry in the fresh gale outside, was seen heading down the coast toward that very point, holes rent in her sails by shot and

one topmast hanging with its sail, a wreck, just cut away.

Almost dead astern two vessels crowded sail, and from these a rapid fire from heavy guns was kept going—while slowly—only at long intervals the first ship returned the fire.

"The *Remorse*, by smoke—'Bijah is tryin' to get away!'" shouted Long Tom, wildly, recognizing the vessel at a glance.

"Jump to *quarters*, men! Get old Ebenezer shotted quick. We'll show our hand now, boys—jump, Jonathan, take the tiller and steer jest to leeward o' the foremost ship. See—she wears the Stars and Stripes. Hurrah for 'Bijah, boys—*hurrah—HURRAH!*"

Cheers rose wildly on the sloop and a faint shout from the ship came back, for she was closing fast and now yawing only enough to get the great gun to bear, Long Tom told the pursuers where the far-famed Terror was.

As the shot went whirling through the air close by the side of the flying ship, well aimed for the nearest craft beyond, yet over a mile in the northern offing, Long Tom saw the ship brace to the wind, as if, conscious of help, those who were on her scorned to continue their flight from the enemy.

"That is 'Bije! He is all *grit* yet!" cried Tom, as his sloop shot close under the stern of the ship.

"Go it, *dad!* We're weak an' short-handed, too—but we'll stick by you, sink or swim!"

It was Abijah, leaning over the rail, with pallid face and eager look, who spoke.

Elathan—propped up against the mizzen-mast upon the poop, was giving orders to the few men working the ship.

Even while he spoke his after gun, one of the long thirty-twos, sent a shot fair into the bows of the sloop-of-war nearest in pursuit.

"Good—good for you, and Ebenezer follows suit!" cried the old captain, as he saw the sloop-of-war in confusion haul by the wind to bring a broadside to bear. "Them last two shots woke up the p'ison sinners—their fore-yard is gone, and—Mighty smoke, that's *business!*!"

A broadside from the sloop made the water foam all around him, yet fortunately not a shot struck either vessel then.

"Jonathan—take a boat and fifteen men quick—go help 'Bijah fight his ship. He has guns enough—but no men to man 'em—don't you see? Keep Ebenezer goin', lads—keep up his fire, and we'll make them p'ison sarpits squeal!"

Jumping to the helm, he threw the sloop up broadside to, and there in line with the *Remorse* she poured in her fire.

The sloop-of-war, disabled forward it seemed by the way her sails and yards and the fore-topmast dangled down, now hauled up, fired fast and furious, and every now and then a shot struck the larger ship, and the stay that held up the flying-jib on the sloop was shot away and two men of a squad that Peter Connolly had ready with muskets for close quarters were struck down by a ball that struck the water, ricochetted, and went through the mainsail just above the boom.

Jonathan Doolittle was speedily on the deck of Abijah's ship and in command, threw every gun he could into action, for she was hove aback and flight was no longer thought of.

By this time the schooner-of-war had come up on a line with the sloop-of-war and her fire was opened on the ship, rapidly.

"Consarn their skins—they think because they're *two*, they'll back us down—I'll sink, by smoke, before I'll put my helm up now!"

And old Tom sprung to the gun himself to help the gunners there.

As he did so—to his surprise, he saw his prisoners rush up from the cabin, fear on their faces, soldiers though they were.

"What's up—consarn ye, stay below!" he shouted.

"Two of our party are dead—a shot just crashed through your stern!" cried the foremost officer.

"Wal, your people sent it—don't you fret! If we're sent to Kingdom Come you'll go along!"

While he was talking he sighted the monster gun, and the heavy shot seemed to rake the schooner fore and aft, for head on, she appeared intent on closing, where her light guns would be more effective.

Six guns at once from the *Remorse*, two of them *thirty-twos*, now made the fight more equal.

The schooner luffed under the heavy fire, and it was to be seen she had suffered from the last broadside.

More feebly the fire came at intervals from the sloop-of-war, which seemed also to wish to close, for men worked hard to clear her forward sail and after sail was taken in to get her head southward once more.

"Give it to 'em the best you can, Jonathan!" shouted Tom, as throwing off coat and hat, he did head-gunner's work. "They're gettin' sick—they're gettin' sick, I'm sure!"

Too busy to know or think of it, the sloop and ship, since heaving to, were drifting slowly in toward the harbor mouth. Flood tide was making strong, and where tides rise and fall nearly twenty feet, they run fearfully fast. Without hoping for such good-luck, the Ameri-

cans were fast nearing a protecting fire, a battery on the Point. And further in, if they made sail to leave their enemies, a fort with heavy guns would cover them with its fire.

The British ships also felt the drift, but they did not yet know their peril and still kept up their fire, though it grew less and less, while the Americans, working as if for life, never slackened, though suffering all the time.

Thrice from his low bulwarks Tom Dart saw the splinters fly which cut down several men, but he never turned from the gun he worked. Only once, as another British officer dropped, he muttered:

"I reckon I can spare them now, for 'Bijah is back again!"

Suddenly a heavy gun boomed out from the battery on the point.

At last the enemy was in range, and the gunners, who had watched the unequal fight almost in an agony of suspense, sent a shot whirling over the tossing waves. It struck fair between the sloop-of-war and her consort, showing them a new peril they had to face.

The schooner, with her spars yet uninjured, bore away at once, and the sloop-of-war appeared to try to follow her example.

But cut up as she was it was not easy, and though she partly got her head off-shore she did not seem to make much way, and she kept up her fire with desperation, as if her commander would rather sink than fly.

Silent and grim, Long Tom fired old Ebenezer yet—the gun so hot he had to sponge with water all the time.

At last he saw the mainmast of the sloop-of-war reel and topple over her side; whether from the battery on shore or his own guns he could not tell, but he knew now her fate was surely sealed.

The schooner, making sail, stood off clear of the new peril from the shore, and Long Tom, drawing aft his sheets and shouting to the *Remorse* to bear up, too, prepared to close with the crippled ship.

Grape and canister went down the throat of Ebenezer now, and though one feeble response came from the plucky man-of-war as the sloop went nearer still and sent in an iron shower, the game was up.

Down came the proud Cross of St. George—the sloop-of-war had struck her colors and the *Remorse* yet was master on the sea.

The schooner, too far out now to be in range, made all the sail her spars could spread and headed away from the fatal shore.

The *Remorse*, with the sloop, bore on toward the almost helpless sloop-of-war, and when old Tom Dart ranged up to windward and asked what ship and who commanded, he got the reply:

"The *Plunger*, sloop-of-war—commanded now by Fanshawe—her captain killed, Fleet-Captain Montrose nearly dead—half our crew dead or disabled!"

It was true. And it was a mere wreck, to be kept afloat with all pumps going, which they took in tow as they steered for Portland Harbor.

"'Bije—we've got Montrose again!" shouted old Tom to his happy son, who barely able to hold up his head, leaned over the quarter of his recovered ship.

"Have we? We'll roast the cuss!" he cried, with a savage energy, which made the survivors of the British prisoners think the Yankees were indeed as revengeful as the red natives of the forest.

CHAPTER XLIII.

"I WAS A STRANGER AND YE TOOK ME IN"—A PARABLE.

WHEN Simon Blossom and Sally Doolittle parted with Mrs. Dalrymple and her daughters at the Black Bear Inn of Podunk, it was with regret and many sad misgivings in regard to the comfort, if not the actual safety of the English ladies. For when it had been learned through the drivers that the ladies belonged to the British nation, many a sneer and some open taunts bravely rebuked by honest Simon, were seen and heard among the tavern loungers. Sally and Simon tried to prevail on them to return to Portland, whence some means might be taken to send them on to Canada or Nova Scotia by sea in greater safety and with more comfort.

But Mrs. Dalrymple was brave and obstinate. She said she had started to go by land and she would not be driven from her course.

After Simon went back and in him she lost a brave protector, she was sorry she had not heeded his advice. The drivers of the teams, civil while he was along, now became surly and insolent, and it was nearly two hours after the clam breakfast was over, that more than half-drunk on cheap rum, they were induced to harness their teams and prepare for a start.

Then a new difficulty arose. The landlord had been paid his full bill for *all* by Simon Blossom, though Mrs. Dalrymple had wished to settle it herself.

Now, when their baggage was being put in its place, the landlord demanded full pay from the lady again.

Mildly at first, angrily at last as the claim was pressed, she refused to pay a bill already settled.

"By jinks, no infarnal Britisher, he or she, can get the best of *me*," shouted the irate landlord. "Not only your bill, but a dollar for the driver's rum has got to come afore you move a wheel out o' Po-dunk! Here, 'squire, I want you to 'tach an' levy on 'em bag and baggage—right here, now!"

"It's the law an' justice, too!" said the 'squire, swelling with dignity. "I forbid ye to move in the name of the Commonwealth and People! *Dirigo!* That's the text we preach from!"

"Yes—by *jinks!*" cried the barber.

"Britishers hev no rights here, nohow! Pay me for lookin' to the hosses' feet to see if any shoes were loose!" added the blacksmith.

And all Podunk grinned assent to each fresh outrage.

"Oh, mother, pay them and let us go!" begged Emma, trembling like an aspen leaf.

"Never!" haughtily cried the proud matron. "I will not submit to these foul outrages!"

"Guess you'll have to. Podunk mud is sticky and you're up to the hubs!" said one of her own drivers.

"Mother—it is no use. Do pay and let us get away from this *rabble!*" cried Alice.

"*Rabble?* Young woman, your words tend to a breach o' the peace. It's just as bad as *swearin'*. I fine you six shillings for callin' the people and *me*, a magistrate, *rabble!*"

And the 'squire fairly foamed over his insulted dignity.

"She made a mistake. I apologize for her—she should have called you poor cowardly *thieves!*" said Mrs. Dalrymple, bitterly.

"*Thieves?* Worse and worse. Woman, I fine you *ten* shillings! By the time I put costs on, I reckon you'll shell out a heap o' British gold. And, drivers—don't you dare to move a team till every bill, and fine and costs are paid!"

The drivers grinned. This suited them, for they calculated to get a share in the pickings.

Mrs. Dalrymple saw, too late, that she was helpless. She had fallen into the worst spot in the State of Maine, and could not get out without yielding to every claim. Those people had never had such a chance before and never expected to again. So they would not let it slip. Living back from the sea, where land was poor, even fishing in shallow bays and creeks indifferent, with no honest way to get a living, they had learned ways new to the great majority of the people of the Pine Tree State. They were mercenary, not even patriotic in their hatred to the British.

Weeping, she drew her purse, paid each exorbitant demand, and then turned to the leading driver.

"Take me to the nearest seaport town," she said. "There—if I cannot go by water, I can at least communicate with friends!"

"Can't do it! 'Tisn't in the contract!" was the cool reply.

"Then turn and drive back to Portland. We'll at least find *men* there who do not live by wronged helpless women!"

The driver went aside and consulted with his companion. Returning he said:

"The contract gives us drivers a dollar a day on to the Canada line and back—a dollar a day and found. And 'twill take two weeks to make it. That would be twenty-eight dollars apiece—countin' two weeks both ways. Pay us that now, and we'd just as quick go back as ahead."

"Is there not some greater robbery you can think of?" cried the indignant lady.

"Robbery? Inciting to riot and misde-meanor! I fine you ten shillings more, ma'am!"

And the 'squire held out his broad, dirty hand.

With a sigh the poor lady gave the 'squire the amount he claimed, got into the wagon and saw it turned south over the road they came.

The drivers had gained their point—she paid the money. But she had resolved, when once in Portland where she felt she could get justice, to have them punished, even if she could not reach the vultures of Po-dunk.

The girls, more terrified than she, were only too glad to relinquish a journey which had begun with so much discomfort and such vile annoyances. They did not know, if they found trouble so early, where it would end, or, if it ever did, whether they would live through it all.

By this time half the day was gone, and they had the misery to think they would have to pass another night upon the road.

Yet it was a consolation to know Podunk was left behind.

CHAPTER XLIV.

ABIJAH AND LONG TOM OVERHAUL THE LOG AND SWAP STORIES.

As soon as the three vessels were in and at an anchor, and a prize crew and guard put on board the captured sloop-of-war, the guard under command of *Sergeant* Peter Connolly, formerly Royal Marines, as he boasted, Long Tom Dart took a boat and went on board the *Remorse* to talk to his brave sons.

"How on airth did you ever get back your ship, weak and helpless creatures as you were?" he asked of 'Bijah.

"We owe it all to Simon Blossom there!" said 'Bijah, for Simon and Sally Ann had that instant come on board and the latter held his thin hands in hers, while she looked with pity on his pallid face and sunken eyes.

"To me?" said Simon, in wonder. "Be you crazy. 'Bijah, I wasn't with you!"

"No, Mister Blossom, not you exactly, but your *spirit* was."

"My *spirit*, 'Bijah! Worse and worse. You're off the hooks *here*, aren't you?"

Simon pressed his hand upon his forehead.

"Sho! Don't git excited, Mr. Blossom. I'm speakin' truth. 'Twas *spirit*s saved us. Do you remember bringin' me and Elnathan two dozen o' rum? We hadn't used more'n a couple o' bottles in toddies. Wal—we fixed up some o' that and got the Britishers when they were dry to test it. They took enough to make 'em boozy and sleepy both, for Nate doctored it a leetle. Then our steward tied the cap'n and mate first and with our men got the crew in the same condition. So you see your *spirit* did the work. After we'd got them in limbo, all that was able went to work and we hove the ship about for Portland.

"We was bowlin' along first chop like a dandy, when we were sighted again by that 'tarnal sloop-of-war under Montrose and the schooner. They were a-layin' tied up in a bay awaitin' for you, Dad, I reckon, and they made chase.

"We put to sea the best we knew how, every rag set we could carry, and got ahead till after dark so fast we thought we were clear and they'd lost us. So we headed in about the course for Portland light, and jest afore day made it out ahead. We were a-scootin' along easy, thinkin' our trouble was all over when day broke, but there the 'tarnal creetur's were, a-crackin' on sail right in our wake. And they were so close they hit us the first shot they fired. We crowded on and shot back the best we could, but we was well-nigh gathered in when you run out to help us! You know the rest and I needn't spin no yarn about it!"

"By smoke, it was done as easy as sliding down a cellar-door, 'Bije. I did mean to give you Jerusalem on Jordan's stormy banks for lettin' the pesky sarpints crawl in and git you. But the master way you beat 'em in the eend makes up for it all! Don't you think so, *Daisy*?"

He addressed Sally now.

"I am glad they are safe—I can hardly realize it yet!" said the brave girl, pressing Abijah's hand. "Were many of your men hurt?"

"Most of 'em got scratched some—none laid out for keeps!" was the answer. "The doctor will set 'em to rights when he gets aboard. The old ship got plugged bad though, and there's work for carpenters and sailmakers too, ahead. You caught it heavy, didn't you, dad?"

"Rayther, my son—rayther! We are six men short, besides a dozen more that'll need mendin' up in hospital. Three prisoners—British officers—got a dose of their own medicine that'll last 'em up to Judgment Day. They got right in the way of British iron and couldn't get out in time! But you didn't know where I got 'em, boy. I ran out nigh the Gulf Stream and picked up a transport ship without firin' a shot—caught 'em napping, you see!"

"Jest your luck, dad. If it had been *me* they'd have been wide awake and on the fight."

"Most like—most like, 'Bijah. But I don't see as you need grumble about luck, now you're a free man on a free ship again."

"I'm not a-frettin', dad. What are you goin' to do with all these prisoners?"

"Don't know. There's one, if he lives, I reckon, will stretch hemp."

"Yes—Montrose. I guess he knows it, for he battled like a tiger, didn't he?"

"Yes, if 'twas *him* who worked the sloop-o'-war."

"I guess he *did*!" said Abijah. "He bossed the job of takin' my ship an' me, and he wasn't so awful ugly either when he had us sure. He asked about the admiral's wife and daughters, and seemed to take it terrible hard to hear that they were gone. I reckon he was arter them as much as me."

"Then it *was* him that Alice Dalrymple saw that night."

"Sart'in sure. He came a-sneakin' round to see how we were fixed afore he made the attack. By what I've heard 'em say, I guess they thought they'd catch dad a-nappin' too. A big lot was a-lookin' for him when they got me. But he was off, and it saved 'em some hard knocks I reckon."

"I calc'late you're right, 'Bijah. There's never the time there isn't a watch aboard the Terror, and the men keep their tools by 'em all the time ready to jump to quarters and make music. There comes old hal-luci-nation pil-garlic, the doctor. It's about time he was aboard if he's on a salary."

From the Remorse Captain Dart took his boat to visit the sloop-of-war and have a personal talk with the prisoners.

Lieutenant Fanshawe, the only officer who had come through the battle without a wound, was frank and candid, and made no denial of what had been done, and in what they failed. He had fought his ship as long as there was a hope, with

her captain dead on the decks, Captain Montrose dying, as he thought, and not an officer to look to for counsel—all dead or disabled. All he asked was fair treatment for his men—not a favor for himself.

"I'd like to see Montrose," said Captain Dart.

"He is in that state-room there—our surgeon says he has got his ticket for another world!"

"Is he mad yet?"

"No, sir, and has not been since he has been with us. He was examined by a board of surgeons in Halifax before he got his command."

Captain Dart, accompanied by the surgeon of the sloop-of-war, went into the state-room where Montrose, deathly pale, breathing faint and low, lay with closed eyes upon his cot.

"Captain—an American officer is here to see you!" said the surgeon.

Montrose looked at Dart, uneasily.

"Do you know me?" asked Long Tom, not unkind in look or tone.

For he thought his enemy was dying.

"Yes—yes—you are he whom we British cannot conquer—Long Tom, the Terror of the Sea!"

"Thankee—that's *me*, allbut the *Terror* part. She is my sloop, and old Ebenezer does the preachin'!"

"Can you do a dying man a favor?"

"I calc'late *yes*, if 'tisn't trenchin' on my duty! What would it be?"

"Had I the wealth of all the world and young life fresh before me, I would give it to see Alice Dalrymple for a few short minutes! She has misjudged and wronged one who dies now for her! Can she not be recalled?—she surely is not far away. My spirit lingers in this crushed form but for one boon—oh, grant it before I die!"

"I would, by smoke, if it was in my power! She went with her mother two days back and must now be far from here!"

"No—no—do not say it. I feel that she is near! My heart thrills with some strange whisper—it is as if a spirit's breath was to my ear—she is near, I know she is near!"

"His mind wanders! His end is near!" said the surgeon, in a low tone. "'Tis hard to see a brave man die!"

"Jest so! Yet there's but one road to travel for 'em all. I guess I'll go outside, doctor—maybe he'll quiet down to sleep!"

"Yes, to wake no more!" said the surgeon, as he looked upon the still, pale face.

A smile was on it, or so it seemed, and a whispered name, "Alice," broke from the thin white lips.

"He lives—he bears up wonderfully for one on the very verge of the other shore!" said the surgeon.

He took a spoon and poured a few drops of some reviving balsam in his mouth. The eyes of the dying captain opened, glanced at Tom Dart dimly.

"Send her to me when she comes!" he sighed.

The old captain slipped away, as noiselessly as he could step. His enemy was beyond the reach of any resentment now. Surely dying, who could do less than pity him?

"Is he dead?" asked Lieutenant Fanshawe, when Long Tom Dart came on tiptoe from the room.

"Not quite, but yet so nigh, there's but a few breaths 'twixt him and Kingdom Come. He takes it hard—he wants to see the gal who was booked to be his wife. He fancies she is near him. He wanders in his mind, the surgeon says!"

"No wonder—he is shot all to pieces. You did not see his wounds?"

"No—his face speaks plain enough of death! He cannot live an hour. When he is gone—let me know. He shall have a brave man's burial, if it is on a foreign shore with the Stars and Stripes above him!"

CHAPTER XLV.

A MIRACLE—A DYING MAN IS BLEST.

"WELL, by smoke! If there be miracles on the face of the earth in these latter days, then this is one. Where did you come from and when?"

These words broke from the lips of Long Tom Dart, when returning from the captured sloop-of-war, his boat reached the side of the Terror.

For there on her deck, with Simon Blossom, Sally Ann and 'Bijah, stood Mrs. Dalrymple and her two daughters.

"We gave up a horrid journey and returned," said the admiral's wife. "There has been tragic work I hear while we were absent. Why do you think it so miraculous that we have come back to our only friends this side the water?"

"Miraculous in *this*, ma'am. A dyin' man prayed as I never heard man pray before to see Miss Alice there, just a minute afore he died. And when I had to tell him she was gone and a long, long ways off as I was sorry to do, he smiled and said a *spirit* whispered in his heart that she was near. And just now, this doctor says he is surely dying, when I came away he said: 'Send her to me when she comes!' Is it not like a miracle I find you here?"

"Who is the dying man?" asked Mrs. Dalrymple.

"I know," said Alice, pale and trembling.

"It is Arthur Montrose. I, too, have felt some strange warning in my heart. Is he sane? Can I see him safely—I mean not for myself, but him?"

"He is helpless as a baby, miss—the breath of life just flutters on his lips. He only seems to think of you."

"Then take me to him, quickly as you can. Mother, sister, Sally, come with me to the ship. I dare not go alone."

Honest Tom, with moist eyes, reached out his hand and helped each one into the boat, then bade his men push off and steered back on board the captured ship.

The surgeon met him on the deck and looked with wonder at the ladies who came over the side.

"Is he living yet?" Dart asked in a low tone.

"Alive and that is *all*. Is the lady he raves about one of these?"

"Yes, and she'll see him, soon as you like."

"Ask her to wait just a moment. I will give him a stimulating draught to nerve him up. Then try yourself to prepare him for the meeting, gently as you can. I fear the shock will end it all at once."

The surgeon soon admitted good old Tom, and quick as the dim eyes rested on his face a faint glad cry broke from the lips of Montrose.

"The living God will bless you. I knew that you would heed my dying prayer. Tell her to come."

Alice heard his words—she stood listening at the door. Trembling, pale as he, she glided in and knelt down by his side and placed her hand upon his brow.

"Alice—my love, my *all* on earth, in heaven! I was true in life, am true in death!"

A calm was on his face. No longer were the sharp lines of agony to be seen. He closed his eyes and whispered:

"Leave me not till all is over!"

"Arthur—my Arthur!" she sobbed, and all but pure and holy love was gone that had stood between her and him.

The surgeon and Tom Dart watched for an instant the wondrous change in his wan face, then left the two alone.

"If earthly power could save him, I'd like to see it done!" said the surgeon, as they went outside. "In all my life, full, too, of scenes of death and suffering, I never saw a case like this. Three hours ago he was dying—twice I felt for a pulse in vain—he must feel agony untold, and yet he smiles as if wrapped in bliss. It is wonderful!"

Time passed—Alice still knelt beside that cot. And he—not dead, was sleeping—sleeping like a sinless babe.

The surgeon stole in and felt his pulse. His face, without a word spoken, told his wonder.

He went out and told Tom Dart a miracle had happened. The dying man, as he supposed, slept with an improving pulse.

The ladies seated in the outer cabin waited, tired and anxious. For a time all was still, then low murmurs were heard. Montrose had woken. Alice and he were talking. What was said no one knew but they, for no one would be so base as to listen.

An hour at least, then Alice called the surgeon.

The captain asked for wine. He wanted strength. And then he called for paper, pen and ink, and one to write at his dictation. He had a will to make. Rich by right in England, sole heir to vast estates, he wished to leave all that he owned on earth to his first, his last, his only love.

The surgeon penned every word he spoke, and when all was written he asked Tom Dart and the surgeon to affix their names, as witnesses, while he wrote his signature plain as if he was yet strong and well.

Yet he knew that he could not live. That the strength he felt was that of *will*—a power of the soul which lifts when all other powers fail. Transient, but blissful, in that he could see and realize that she, his love, was near and would be to the end.

After the will was made and signed, he sent for Mrs. Dalrymple. When she came he pressed her hand, pointed to the will and said:

"Keep that for your child."

Hearing Sally's voice, he asked to speak to her.

"Forgive the *spy*," he said, in a low, sad tone, "who to serve his king hath caused so much grief in honest hearts. Do not let hate hang like a cloud above my grave!"

Sally was in tears, she with all but Alice left the room—a change was coming once more in his face—a hue of ashen gray, and the lips seemed turning blue, while the eyes brightened as they strove to keep fixed on the dear face he loved so well.

The surgeon felt the fluttering pulse—a sad look on his anxious face.

"He was so strong, but now he fails, fails very fast!" he whispered.

The dash of many oars, like those of a full-manned boat, came loud on every ear, for all in the cabin were still and silent now.

"Boat ahoy! What boat is that?" came from the officer on deck.

"A flag of truce from Admiral Dalrymple, whose ship is off the port!" was the quick reply.

CHAPTER XLVI.

A WIDOWED BRIDE—DEATH AND THE ALTAR.

MONTROSE, almost in the chill of death, heard the hail and the response. Another struggle for a little longer hold on life occurred.

"More wine!" he gasped. "More wine! I am not ready yet!"

The surgeon placed a glass of wine to his lips. He drank it all. It seemed to warm the freezing veins.

"Send for the admiral—his chaplain, too. They will let him come to see me die!"

"Yes," said Tom Dart—"Yes, if it was the last order I ever gave, I'd give it now. Tell the admiral he is safe to come in and take those he loves back to his ship!"

And the officer who came went flying back fast as oars could take his barge with the message sent.

And once more the surgeon felt a rising pulse, saw the dim eyes brighten and heard Montrose talk in low, mourning tones to her who, seated by his cot, strove through her tears to speak cheering words.

From time to time, by spoonfuls now, the surgeon touched his lips with wine.

"Why do they wait?" he gasped. "My time is brief—why do they wait?"

"Patience—oh, my love—you yet may conquer death!" whispered Alice.

"I would not if I could, my love. Shattered limbs, a body pierced and rent, a human wreck, life would be but misery to you and me!"

Agony was on him while he spoke, but bravely yet he fought not for life, but time.

Again the rapid rush of oars and when a hailing cry was heard, the answer came proud and clear:

"Tis I—the admiral! Sent for, I have come!"

"Thank Heaven, I have lived for this! More wine—five minutes more and I will die content!"

Montrose seemed to gather a strange energy. He partly rose in bed.

"Alice, grasp my hand. Your father comes! Let him see that we are as one once more!"

The admiral flushed with haste, doubtless too with joy as he pressed a silent, loving kiss on the dear face of his noble wife, hurried to where his oldest child was standing.

His chaplain, an aged, nobleman, followed, and with clasped hands looked down upon the pallid face of a hero and a friend.

"Quick, chaplain, quick, while life is yet mine to give—to give my bride a name and fortune. Admiral, I claim thy child. Refuse me not!"

The admiral pressed the clasped hands between his own, turned to the chaplain, bowed his head and said:

"Go on!"

Brief was the ceremony, but as binding as if all the rituals known were read.

Not an eye was dry in the breathless group who listened and who watched.

The last words were spoken, "Whom God hath joined, man shall not sunder!"

For an instant all was still. The beat of waves outside the ship, the throb of hearts within—all waited, watched.

A rosy gleam, a smile of joy, no word at first, then like a sigh—"Alice—my wife!"

It was the last proud struggle of a fleeting soul.

One gasp, and all was over. Alice was wife and widow within a minute's time.

Sobbing, she bent and kissed lips touched by the icy hand of death.

"He was too brave—too good to die!" she moaned.

"Daughter, it is a hero's boon to die as he has died upon the deck that he defended to the last! Tears, sighs, will not bring back the spirit gone to rest!"

In loud tones, the chaplain breathed a prayer to Him who gave and Him who taketh life away.

And then, almost by force, poor Alice was drawn away from the side of him whose eyes were closed forever.

In the cabin the admiral told Long Tom Dart how he came to be off the port.

News had come to the fleet that the ship in which his wife and daughters sailed had been taken, and that they were held captive in Portland Harbor. He had left his second in command in his place in the fleet, and in person had come to ask their freedom.

"They have used us as guests—not as captives!" was the statement Mrs. Dalrymple made to her husband.

The admiral looked with wonder on the shattered wreck of what was late a noble sloop-of-war, and heard what a hard battle had been fought before she succumbed.

Grasping the hand of old Tom Dart he said:

"If you served my king one-half as well as you fight against him, you would wear the star of knighthood on your breast. Though under a

hostile flag, no man can hold you in more esteem than I. Brave, but not cruel, daring in battle, but merciful to the conquered, you are an honor to the name of MAN!"

"Admiral, don't pile it on too thick! I'm only a plain, blunt sailor man who tries his best in all he does. I've my failin's, and I know 'em—one of 'em is to think I can't be whipped, and it'll trip me up one o' these short days, I'm sartin'. But I keep on, makin' my contracts blind, like I did when I tackled on the man-o'-war outside, and I suppose I will till this 'tarnal war is over and we are at peace again!"

"Oh, will it ever be?" cried Sally, who stood side by side with Abijah near the admiral and his family.

"Yes, soon, too, for I know them as has the hottest work are sick at heart while in it. It is only the big-wigs who never hears the shrill whistle of a shot would keep us at it."

The admiral held a brief conference with Tom Dart apart from all the rest—a business talk, the latter said.

It ended in an agreement to release all officers on parole, pledged to raise no hand again in the war until exchanged for Americans held on the other side.

The admiral was to be allowed to take them off and put them on some ship that might be homeward-bound when he had opportunity.

His family restored, he said he would sail at once for Halifax, carrying the body of Montrose, embalmed, along, and there he should apply for leave to return home.

"Unless attacked before I reach my British home," he said, "I will never draw my sword on those who have been so kind to those I love, or on the flag they honor."

"Admiral, squeeze! My heart is in the hand I offer!" cried old Tom, when he heard these words. "As to your good wife and gals, there isn't many women on the airth who can take sides and beat 'em in goodness or in looks. They've been *ladies*, in all their troubles, and—Well, it's as hard to part with 'em as if—if I was akin to 'em—it is, by smoke! If ever the war falls through, and you're in sight o' Salem town, jest drop in and the best Tom Dart has is yours! 'Bijah, here, is goin' to splice 'fore long, and I'll have a darter, too. Eh, Sally?"

"Dad—why can't that be now, while the iron is hot for welding! The chaplain there is a main good hand, short and sweet, and I'd like to hear him say to me and Sally, I pernounce you man an' wife—eh, dad?"

Abijah was in earnest. Sally, blushing, did not dissent.

And Long Tom, with a quizzical look, answered:

"If the admiral is willin'—I sha'n't kick! It is *his* chaplain you want to use—not *ours*!"

"I am glad he can be so useful. And here is a bridal-ring!" the Briton added, as he took from his little finger a broad circlet of yellow gold in which one large diamond sparkled. "I hope 'twill be a fit!"

And he placed it in the chaplain's hand to use.

Again the binding words were spoken that linked warm hands and loving hearts, and Abijah whispered, as he kissed his bride:

"What will poor Simon Blossom say?"

"That you're a naughty, naughty fellow to be so fast and not ask him to stand as your right-hand man!" was her answer, with an arch smile.

Tom Dart and his son pressed the admiral hard to let the flag of truce fly a day or two and make a jolly time and have a wedding feast; but the sea-veteran pointed to his weeping, widowed child—and said it could not be. For her sake, if for naught else, he must ask to be excused. And after a brief exchange of courteous words, partaking of a lunch in the famed Terror's roomy cabin, the admiral went off. Three boats from the Terror and Remorse accompanied him, to carry the released prisoners, and to allow Sally to see her late friends safe back on board the seventy-four.

When all were on board, the huge ship, which had lain off-shore under short canvas, crowded sail and swiftly bore away to the north.

CHAPTER XLVII.

SIMON BLOSSOM'S SORROW.

SIMON BLOSSOM—enlisted as assistant for the time to the medical believer in hal-luci-na-tion, was very busy in helping to make the wounded comfortable on Abijah's ship, while the latter "stole a march," so to speak, and so suddenly became a married man.

Not until the boats came back from the trip to the admiral's ship, and Abijah walked weak and tired into his cabin, he leaning on Sally's arm, had the loyal honest councilman a thought of such a thing.

Then Abijah threw back his head, and said:

"Simon, can't ye wish me joy?"

"What—what for?" asked Simon, with a dazed and startled look.

"Me and Sally has gone and jumped the broomstick. Don't stare so, man—we're married!"

"Married?"

The word seemed to choke the good old bachelor.

"You and—Sally?"

"Yes, Simon—me and Sally! The admiral's darter Alice, she got married to a dyin' man by his chaplain, and while he had his book in hand I thought I'd ask Sally to take a live one. And there bein' no one not consentin', the splice was made, and here we be!"

"Yes—I see! Well, I'm goin' home to-morrow if I live and have my being! I'll tell the deacon I found Sally and lost her afterward."

"You'll do better. You'll stay a week till I'm ready to go to sea again, and then you'll take Sally home for me. Until the war is over my ship is no home for her. For I'm not goin' to shirk my duty 'cause I'm a married man. She doesn't ask it—do you, Sally?"

"It will be hard to know you are in danger and I not near to aid you," was her reply. "But you know best, Abijah; I am yours, sworn to love, honor and obey!"

"D'y'e hear that, Simon! Isn't she ahead o' honey?"

Simon sighed. He had no other answer he could make just then. The honey was not for his hive.

Elnathan kissed his sister. Simon would have done it had he dared. He did not. But that night when Old Tom Dart wanted him to play a game of checkers he said no—he had no luck of late, he'd rather not.

And when he went into his bunk to sleep he rolled, and tossed and groaned, till the doctor went with a dose of paregoric and bid him take it and be quiet if he could—for no one else in the forward cabin could get a wink of sleep.

It was a busy time—the next six days. Carries and prizes appraised and sold, money divided among the brave men who had earned it, enlisting new recruits and refitting the Remorse below and aloft. Sally wanted her name changed now—but 'Bijah said one name had been changed, that was enough.

The old Terror had to be patched up considerably, and while he had the time Long Tom treated her to a new coat of paint, laid her out and cleaned her bottom.

There was no trouble in getting men and good ones for both vessels now. Their "luck," as it was termed, had given them a famous name, and if they could have worked and quartered thrice as many men, they were on hand eager to be enrolled.

The week was passed. Refitted—hull, spars and sails, the Remorse lay off in the stream, full manned and officered—Abijah well enough to do duty. Elnathan, too, a little shaky on his pins, but able to stand a watch.

The Terror, as good, Long Tom said better than she ever was, lay near, with her colors flying—ready to court the ocean wave and strike for fame and fortune.

Sally had passed a happy week—busied in fitting out her husband's cabin and seeing nothing lacked in his wardrobe. These were rights she claimed.

But the week was ended. Simon, who had consented—he did not seek the favor—to escort her to her father's house, had bought a roomy chaise in which to make the journey. The horse he had ridden up from Salem, rested long, fed faithfully and cared for well, was now strong and fit for travel.

The saddle and saddle-bags were stowed behind the seat, and in front there was room for the scant baggage Mrs. Dart would take along.

Simon tried his best to seem happy and contented with his fate. But evident it was that he had sorrow in his heart.

When Abijah kissed his loving wife good-by, he pressed Simon's hand and in it left more than enough money to defray all expenses, and said:

"Simon—I put Sally in your care, knowin' well no better man walks upon the airth and that you'll see her home safe and sound. I'm off with daddy on a cruise and you'll hear slashin' news from us afore you're many weeks the older! Tell the deacon I'm a happy man and I'll try to make his Sally a home that he and she will be proud of. Good-by—old man—take good care o' Sally, and many blessin's chase you as you go!"

There were tears in the azure eyes of Sally when they parted, but when Simon started his bay nag in a good round trot on the homeward route, she brightened and soon chatted as lively as if she was going to, not from, a loving husband's arms.

It was early in the day, and going back on board, looking at a code of signals he and his father had invented for their own use, Abijah ran up this:

"Ready to sail!"

In a second the answer came at the truck of the Terror. It read thus:

"Make sail—I'll keep you company!"

Around flew the creaking windlass—up crept the sloop's great mainsail, while from yard and boom upon the ship loosened folds of canvas fell ready to be sheeted home when the anchors left the ground.

Cheer upon cheer from friends on shore, echoed from each gallant craft, told dear

friends were parting now, and soon down the silver-rippled bay the swift hulls sped away.

Whither bound their commanders only knew. But when the sun went down that night, far to the south, still side by side, father and son each at the helm, the vessel's drove, like birds seeking a warmer clime when winter's flags are flying.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

NEW SCENES AND GLORIES.

A MONTH had gone as time almost ever goes—too fast for counting days and hours. In a deep bay on the eastern shore of "Maryland, my Maryland," a ship and sloop lay nestled as close to shore as the hulls could be drawn. A grove of lofty trees, so close at hand it overshadowed spars and decks with spreading branches, concealed these vessels so well that a large fleet scarce six miles away at anchor, had not a man or officer with eyes keen enough to mark them in their hiding-place.

Back of the stately grove, on a tree-crowned hill, a large mansion so embowered by ancient oaks it was hidden from the bay, arose above a verdant lawn.

Down a flower-bordered walk a young and handsome man, sun-brown and weather-stained in face, but erect and lithe as an Apollo in his form, walked arm in arm with a maiden who was young and rarely pretty. While his eyes were blue and his hair a soft nut-brown, she looked from eyes as dark as jet, while her hair, in black, wavy curls, hung over her fair neck and shoulders.

They were talking of that which belongs alike to old and young, though the young seem to claim it as their pre-empted right on most occasions—*love*.

Only a week before those two were strangers. Yet now—vows had been uttered and pledges made, which, if kept, would unite them both forever.

One was Elnathan Dart, first officer of the ship *Remorse*—the other Lillie Vane, the daughter of a noble man who, even then, was held a captive in tyrant hands.

And only waiting for night to fall, the hero of that young girl's heart was going to peril his life and save her doomed father from a cruel death—or as he told her there, she never would see him more.

He had formed his plans, and he would succeed or die!

Three days before Colonel Charles Elwood Vane, the father of Lillie, the queenly girl upon his arm, when in a boat gunning, with a single servant, a negro slave in his company, was set upon when down the bay upon his own ducking-ground, by a British officer and boat's crew and shamefully insulted.

Bearing the wrong with dignity, he tried to leave the persecuting crowd, but the officer, insolent with power, pushed his insult further and struck the noble man foully in the face, calling him a low Yankee dog, who could whine but would never bite.

Maddened by these taunts and the outrage of a blow, the gentleman, owner of vast estates and one of the noblest men of the age, turned and shot the aggressor down.

Overpowered, seized and bound, he was carried on board the sloop-of-war which the slain officer commanded—Lord Craven—his name and character well suited.

There tried by a court-martial composed of officers of the fleet, friends of the slain man, without a witness in his defense but that one poor slave, he was condemned to die—to be hung from the yard-arm of that ship in sight of his own estates on the fourth morning from his trial and sentence.

The slave allowed to come on shore in his master's skiff told the sad story, and Lillie, flying to the man she had met and loved when a visitor at the mansion, told him the danger of the dear father—her only parent alive. Her mother died when she was born.

And Elnathan Dart, knowing that with both his brother's ship and his father's sloop, it would be impossible to take this vessel out from a heavy fleet of more than six hundred guns, all told, had formed a plan worthy of the days of ancient chivalry to save the doomed father of his love.

On that night, after the mid-watch had been set, in the large whale-boat belonging to his ship, with twelve of his best and bravest men armed with cutlasses and pistols, he was to approach the ship with muffled oars, surprise her lookout if he could, dash on board, secure the prisoner and pull right out to sea in the dense darkness—a route the enemy would never think of his taking.

The ship and sloop with his promised bride on board were to drop out from the bay before that time, make out to sea close along the northern shore and be ready to receive and protect the rescued man and those who had saved him, if it indeed was done.

The plan was bold, none more daring could be formed, and it was the only one in which there lay even a shadow of success.

And this was discussed over and over again

on board the ship, finally agreed upon, and now Elnathan was taking Lillie from her home to the safe guardianship of his brother on the ship, for well he knew when the old colonel was rescued, the first place the British would search would be his mansion house on shore and then she would be exposed to death, to say the very least.

With fire and sword, outrage upon outrage by the invaders from the fleet had sent terror through the fairest portion of that State and near Virginia.

On board his ship, the father saved, Lillie promised to become his wife and thus bless the man who risked life to prove his true love for her.

"They may burn our home, destroy our crops and herds and flocks," said the fair girl, as she and her brave lover passed over the broad estate, "but the land will be here when the storm of war is passed, and if my father lives, our fortune is but impaired, not lost."

Thus cheerily talking, as if he could not fail, in whom she placed all hope and trust, the fair girl left her grand old home without a sigh—two thoughts filling her pure young heart—if her father lived, it would be through her noble lover's daring act.

The vessels moored head and stern almost touching in their leaf-shaded hiding-places, were ready all the time for a desperate defense—every gun shotted and depressed for action at the closest range, while the sails were furled in yarns instead of their regular jackets torn loose by halliards could be hoisted and set at a minute's warning if their commanders sought to get off upon the sea.

None of the crew, except on occasions like that which sent Elnathan away, left their vessel, and ready all the time they watched the vultures on the bay with eager eyes and vengeful hearts.

"Glad to see you aboard, Nate, and my sister that is to be," said Abijah, when his brother and Lillie Vane stepped from the high bank off upon his quarter-deck.

"Are the men whom I chose all ready and willing to back me to the bitter end?" asked Elnathan, as the three went into the roomy cabin where Lillie was now to make her home.

"They be, Nate. Ready to succeed or die! The arms are ready. Every cutlass ground to edge and point, every pistol loaded, the rockets in the boat and nothing left unthought of. The muffled oars have all been tested—not a blade will enter water that is not strong and true so the men can pull for life when they get away! Water, wine and food, should you miss us when yet outside, are there enough to last till you can reach a place of safety."

"They must not miss us!" cried Lillie, in nervous fear. "I should die of terror and suspense should they not meet us when we get to sea, as Elnathan has arranged."

"Fear not!" her lover said. "I will not fail to find the ship. I will row out as near her track as I can judge—rockets and lights will guide me on board. The night promises well—no moon, a wind fair off-shore, it will be smooth as we head along by the northern shoals and we'll make time, you may wager high, when we've got the colonel in and strike out for life and freedom, too!"

"Heaven guard you all!" was the fervent prayer which broke from Lillie's lips.

"Amen, by smoke!" cried Long Tom Dart, who had come unheard upon the scene. "You'll succeed by my boy—with us there is no such word as fail."

Supper was called for an early hour, and then in the cabin the selected men were told every item of the plan, so there would be no guesswork for them to do. And with her own fair hand, so they could not be mistaken in the dark, Lillie cut from white cloth a little star and put it on the dark breast of the colored shirts they wore.

"Rescue my father," the fair girl said, "and to every man, when we return to our home, a farm and home shall be given, or its worth in gold!"

"We'd do it, miss, if we never expected more than a kind word o' thanks from one so gentle and fair! We'll save him, don't you fear!"

It was but a short hour to midnight, and the boat pulled out from the ship so still that, but for the dripping of water from each lifted oar, not a sound was heard.

Out into the darkness, toward the ship, six miles away, marked well by its lights and compass bearings, the whale-boat headed.

And the instant she was gone, with noiseless speed sails fell from yard and boom, oiled blocks allowed halliards to hoist and sheet home without a creak, and then, gathering way as they left the land, the vessels moved from their hiding-place.

Heading down as close to the eastern shore as the soundings would allow, they glided on, while Lillie's eyes were turned to where every hope of her young life was centered.

CHAPTER XLIX.

NEARING A GLORIOUS END.

UNDER the break of the forecastle, guarded by an armed marine, ironed hand and foot, the

doomed prisoner, Charles Elwood Vane, sat, hopeless of all relief.

Not even allowed paper and ink to pen a last word to the child he loved, kept in the chill air in the place where the meanest criminal was confined, there where he could see the stars that shone above his home, the brave man sat and listened to the dash of the sullen waves, the measured tread of the lone sentinel who paced his beat.

When the sun rose, from the black yard above his head, he would see the rope noosed which was to lift him up from persecution's cruel grasp.

The midnight hour was past. The sentinels were changed. The land breeze brought off the scent of trees and grass and flowers, and fanned his hot brow.

"My child—may Heaven guard my lonely child!" he prayed, as he thought how very near, the end.

Ah! Did he hear a dipping oar? Or was it a fancy of his tortured brain? No!—no! A little jar, a sound as if some object touched the bow of the ship besides the ripple of the tide against the stern.

"Treason—help!" gasped the sentinel, as a dark form leaped from the darkness and clutched him by the throat, strangling the cry of alarm and hurling him down flat upon the deck.

And the colonel saw by the one dim light a half-dozen stalwart forms, a white star on each manly breast, spring to his side.

In a second, lifted up, as shouts ran over the ship from sentinels alarmed, dropped over the bow into a waiting boat, and off, while guns echoed loud, the boatmen pulled as silent as the grave, not a word yet spoken—off into the utter darkness, out toward the open sea, each ashen blade bending to his utmost strength, each man strained every muscle—it was a race for life!

Cannons boomed; rockets rose from twenty ships; all was a wild alarm throughout the fleet; but the boat dashed on; nothing was in her way.

Miles were almost as minutes at speed, and then, for the first time since the sentinel had gasped out his alarm, Colonel Vane heard a welcome voice:

"You are safe—thank God!"

"It is you, Elnathan Dart? To you I owe my life and liberty!"

"Rather to these brave, true men of mine, who have not swerved from a single order given. Never was a surprise better carried out. Unseen we reached the ship—knowing where prisoners were kept, we were under the bow and on the sentinel so suddenly I hoped he would have no chance to shout an alarm. In that alone we failed. The rest is a success—complete!"

"My daughter—does she know of this?"

"Yes, colonel, yes; she is on my ship, and soon you will press her to your arms, and we will cut those clanking chains from your limbs. Knowing pursuit at once would be made and your home be searched, our vessels have gone to sea, where I will be taken up in a little while. I expect to see their signals within the hour."

"It is like a dream," said the colonel. "I had no hope. Powerless in tyrant hands; goaded by cruel taunts, the rope reeved aloft upon the yard where I was to hang at the rise of this morning's sun—I could do naught but despair!

"Never, never on earth was a braver rescue made. In a ship manned with two hundred men—armed sentinels forward and aft, it seems incredible you could approach unheard and then unhurt bear me in this blessed vail of darkness beyond the reach of my murderous enemies!"

"Take it easier now, my hearties—I feel the outside swell—we soon will see some sign of our mates outside and know where they wait!" cried Elnathan.

The men tired with a long strain, were glad to breathe on an easier stroke of their muffled oars.

Steering by wind and stars, Elnathan judged his course, and when near two hours were gone took a small rocket, ignited a fuse by steel and flint, and sent it up.

In a second of time, as if the answer waited, one went up close aboard—a light was seen, and springing to their oars, the men neared the welcome ship.

"The cruel—cruel chains! Accursed tyrants to put them on my noble father!"

This was the cry of Lillie Vane, when her father, lifted to the deck, was clasped in her arms and she heard the harsh clank of manacles.

"We'll soon free him of them!" declared Abijah. "Send the armorers here with files and saws."

Hoisting in the boat, the ship and sloop, under a press of sail, stood north, and at dawn of day, Cape Charles far astern, the English fleet all out of sight, a clear sea ahead, a happy band thanked Heaven for its mercies.

The sun rose, but no free-born American swung from the black yard of a tyrant's ship!

Charles Elwood Vane was free, and though his mad pursuers burned his home, scattered his terror-stricken slaves, and did all the damage

hate could command, they could not find the man they had sworn to hang.

And beyond the story of the sentinel that a band of black fiends had leaped out of the silent darkness upon him, and choked him down, they did not know how the rescue had been effected.

They had not heard or seen a boat; not a weapon had been used, of so many ready, the work was done so soon, so still, it seemed magical.

The British, wild with rage, would have given his weight in crowns of gold to have had the colonel once more in their power.

It was not to be!

CHAPTER L.

OUR CRUISE IS OVER—GOOD-BY!

SIMON BLOSSOM fulfilled the trust Abijah Dart assigned him. Safely and speedily as he could he escorted *Mistress Dart* (he would call her "*Sally*" nevermore!) back to the deacon's mansion in Salem.

That done, he went back to trade, and seemed to busy himself within the shadows of his great, dusty store. He still went to council when he was called—but he was a moody, silent man, and scarce ever smiled.

"Where on earth do you think the *Darts* can be? Nor ship, nor sloop has ever been heard of, they say, since they sailed from Po Island Bay."

The deacon spoke thus to Simon, as they stood on the wharf one day, full six weeks after Simon brought Sally back.

"Maybe they're *took*, or *drownded*!"

"No such good-luck!" growled Simon, with a moody frown.

"Good-luck? Man alive, do you know what you are saying?"

"Guess I do! Look there! What's *them* a comin' in?"

The old bachelor pointed to the offing. A sloop flying two well-known flags, a ship—"Re-morse" on her blue burgee—and another following, loaded to the bends—a prize—were just outside the channel heading in for port.

"'Tis Long Tom Dart, Abijah, and a prize to boot!" shouted the old deacon, wild with joy. "Run, men, run and spread the news. Ring every bell in town! Long Tom Dart is coming home once more!"

Moody still, with knit brows and lips compressed, Simon stood upon the wharf. Hundreds came crowding down, Sally among the rest; he did not move for any or speak to a single one.

Grandly the little fleet sailed in. Guns from the batteries thundered a salute; the people cheered till every throat was hoarse, and in every face but one the light of supreme joy was shining.

Rounding to, in the old anchorage, furling sails in a style that told of discipline and active service, too, the vessels soon lay at rest.

From each a boat was lowered, and well-known men came dashing in from shore. Long Tom first from his grand old sloop, Jonathan Doolittle from the prize, and Abijah from his gallant ship.

With him, in the boat, a handsome man of middle age, with a noble air—Elnathan Dart, and by the side of the latter a lovely, blushing girl, who clung to his strong arm, as a climbing flower clings to its support.

Sally bounded to her husband's arms when his foot touched the wharf, and at the same moment, Elnathan, with his "convoy," halted where Simon stood.

"How d'ye do, old friend?" he cried. "I'm home and have brought a wife along!"

"Jest so! That's about all the *Darts* are good for!" snarled the unhappy man, as he turned away.

"Consarn the old reprobate!—he has gone crazy, I do believe!" cried the deacon, who had heard it all.

That day and night all Salem rung with glad rejoicings. The *Darts*, the heroes of the town, shared with the deacon's son the honors of the day.

They had served their country well, and had, with their crews, grown rich on British spoil.

"I s'pose you'll lay over now and rest on your fame and wealth!" said the deacon to Long Tom Dart, that night, as they smoked their pipes together.

"No, deacon, no! As long as a hostile flag floats along our shores, so will old Tom Dart make *Ebenezer* ring—the Terror of the Sea!"

"And 'Bijah and Elnathan—will they, too, keep on—now they're married men?"

"If they don't, they're no sons o' mine. The States wants no lagging now. England has tried her best to crowd us down; we've kicked, and we'll keep on till we kick the pison lion from our coast. Mark that! You can look out for our women and your own, and when peace reigns throughout the land and over the ocean wave, we'll all come ashore and be as quiet as we can!"

"I sail within a week. 'Bijah and Nate will come when they get ready!"

And they did.

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98 William Street, New York.